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NOW & THEN

THE APPALACHIAN MAGAZINE

THE CENTER FOR APPALACHIAN STUDIES AND SERVICES • EAST TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY

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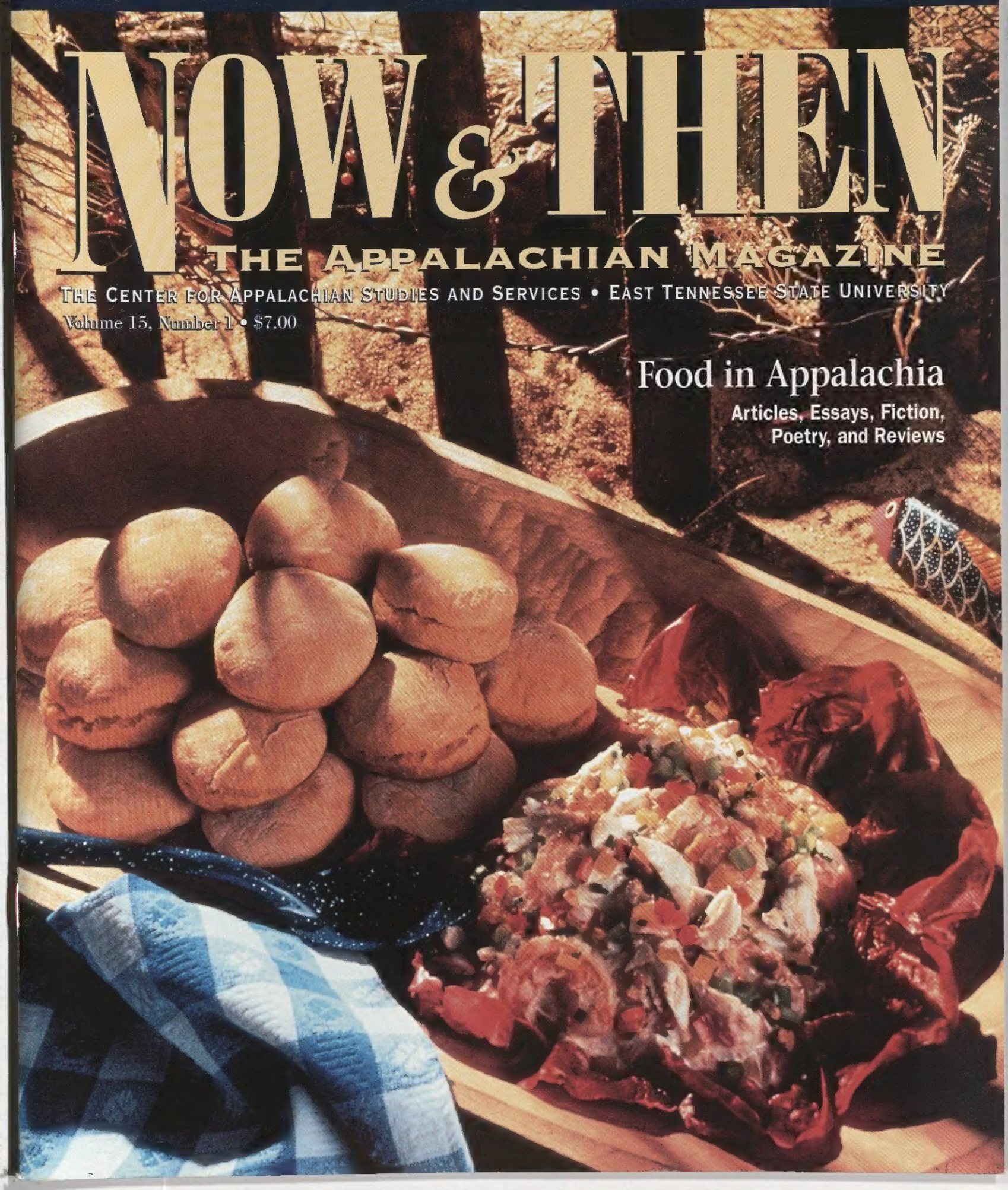
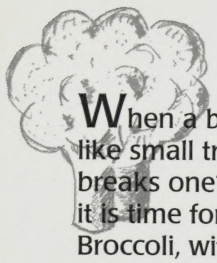


Food in Appalachia

Articles, Essays, Fiction, Poetry, and Reviews



Broccoli

(After Galway Kinnell)

When a bowl of broccoli—
like small trees felled by a woodchopper—
breaks one's heart,
it is time for company.
Broccoli, with its odor
of something too long in the refrigerator,
with its slightly bitter taste
reminiscent of the quinine of our youth,
is solitary in itself
and if taken alone over too long a period
can lead to melancholia,
a state that causes one to be visited
by numerous departed souls,
not the least of whom are writers.
Out of the crowd that gathers around my dining table
I select a suitable companion,
this evening the Bronte family,
a crowd in themselves.
Anne is not well and says she doesn't care
for broccoli, that even a bite
might push her over the edge.
Branwell asks what's to drink,
blanches at the offer of milk
and drifts off through the open window,
convinced a pub waits just over the next hill
of my East Tennessee farm.
Emily and Charlotte have more staying power.
Emily tells me it was broccoli that inspired
Wuthering Heights, the dark brooding
of Heathcliff not unlike a bowl of broccoli
left too long on the cook fire.
Charlotte nods agreement.
Jane Eyre would never have existed
had Charlotte not been forced as a child
to eat every last bite of broccoli.
She remembers sitting at the table
long after everyone else had departed,
remembers staring into her plate, green stems and tops
having sagged into a solitary morass,
potatoes and bread that might have mellowed
broccoli's taste, long since eaten.
It was then she saw Jane Eyre in the orphanage.
Over the next weeks her father wondered
at her choice of broccoli
on each evening's menu,
her hours at the table while he
and the rest of the family sat in the parlor,
a fire simmering against the English dampness,
the open Bible on his lap.
He prayed for his recalcitrant daughter,
and she, at her lonely post, heard his words,
her mind composing page after page.
In later years she never allowed
broccoli in the house.
Perhaps if she had…
but she won't let me go on,
whether she regrets no more pain
or is convinced one *Jane Eyre* from any author
is enough is unclear to me.
Tomorrow for dinner I'll cook cabbage,
that most slippery of God's vegetable creations,
one that if eaten alone can induce hallucinations.
Edgar Allan Poe will likely have dinner with me.

—Connie Jordan Green

Connie Jordan Green lives in Lenoir City, Tenn., and teaches writing at the University of Tennessee-Knoxville. Her poetry has been published in many periodicals, including Now & Then, Cumberland Poetry Review, Poem *and others in addition to appearing in anthologies produced by the Knoxville Writers' Guild, the Tennessee Writers Alliance, and the Tennessee Humanities Council.*

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Photograph of Dean Fearing's shrimp and crabmeat salad with sweet potato biscuits. The Mansion on Turtle Creek.

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NOW & THEN

THE APPALACHIAN MAGAZINE

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"Appalachia has nurtured, in one way or another, all these creators of fine foods, who stir their pots in rural mountain towns and in huge American cities."
— Jean Haskell Speer

ARTICLES

3 An Appetite for Life — *Michael Barrick*
6 Uppity Mountain Cooking — *Jean Haskell Speer*
14 Kitchens — *Heather Ann Ackley Bean*
18 Recipes and Remedies — *Bernice Waller Ackley*
21 A Pawpaw Primer — *Colleen Anderson*
26 The Three Sisters — *Jane Mt.Pleasant*

ESSAYS

12 Of Possums and Papaws — *Joel Davis*
19 Turnips, Rules, and Joan of Arc — *Patricia Davidson*

FICTION

30 The Long and Short of It — *Llewellyn McKernan*

POETRY

◁ Broccoli — *Connie Jordan Green*
5 Eating Italian — *Allison Cooper*
11 Sausage — *Charley Hively Jr.*
25 Favorite Organ — *Nell Maiden*
29 Holy Manna — *Robert S. Richmond*
33 Wild Strawberries — *John Cantey Knight*
39 Ditch Tea — *Michael McFee*
40 Homesick — *Diane Gilliam Fisher*
41 Chores — *Thomas Rain Crowe*

REVIEWS

34 ***The Bluegrass Music Cookbook*** by Penny Parsons, Ken Beck, and Jim Clark — *Nancy Fischman*
35 ***Whop Biscuits & Fried Apple Pie: Cooking with Gatlinburg's Great Smoky Arts & Crafts Community*** by Kathy Shields Guttman — *Sidney Saylor Farr*
35 ***Bootstraps and Biscuits: 300 Wonderful, Wild Food Recipes from the Hills of West Virginia*** by Anna Lee Terry — *Mary Rodd Furbee*
36 ***Mountain Country Cooking: A Gathering of the Best Recipes from the Smokies to the Blue Ridge*** by Mark F. Sohn — *Peggy Lewis Smith*
37 ***Books & Music Worth Mentioning*** — *Sandra L. Ballard*
38 ***Ulster and North America: Transatlantic Perspectives on the Scotch-Irish*** edited by H. Tyler Blethen and Curtis W. Wood Jr. — *Rodger Cunningham*

Gastronomic Meditations

Editing this issue has at times been torture. I first realized this hard truth as I sat at my computer one morning entering Michael Barrick's description of the Italian bread made by Tomaro's Bakery in Clarksburg, W.Va.: It is "crisp on the outside but soft and warm on the inside, steaming just under the thin crust." I took a very early lunch.

There is certainly no shortage of tantalizing descriptions of the colors, the textures, and the aromas of food in these pages. But, not surprisingly, I discovered that once you start discussing food, you quickly move on to talking about something or someone else. Food is among the most versatile of metaphors. For instance, in Llewellyn McKernan's short story, "The Long and Short of It" (p. 30), Hope's sensuous, reckless relationship to sweets is emblematic of her whole approach to life, with all its rewards and costs.

Food is often a way of meditating on our relationship to our families, especially to our mothers, grandmothers, and great-grandmothers, as Heather Bean does through her close study of an old family cookbook in "Kitchens" (p. 14). In Jean Speer's "Uppity Mountain Cooking" (p. 6), Clinchport, Va.-born chef Jack McDavid thinks back fondly to "the love my grandmothers and my mother put on each plate." On the other hand, Patricia Davidson's "Turnips, Rules, and Joan of Arc" (p. 19) reminds us just what a battlefield the dinner table can be in those skirmishes designed to give a mother notice that before too long, her services will no longer be needed in quite the same way as they are when her children are small.

Moving beyond our immediate families, we see the role food plays in communities. Describing the eating habits of an Italian-American community as "a never-ending meal," in "An Appetite for Life" (p. 3), Barrick notes that "food, to be sure, is critical, but ultimately it is just a draw, really, a magnet to pull everyone together."

This issue, of course, is about food in a particular region — Appalachia. Speer points out that there is a commonly held notion of what all real Appalachians eat: sausage, biscuits, gravy, pawpaws, and roadkill. Stereotypical Appalachian foods, then, are mostly country and mostly Southern.

We acknowledge the truth underlying these stereotypes with Colleen Anderson's engaging account of the pawpaw's struggle to make a comeback (p. 21) and with Joel Davis' essay, "Of Possums and Papaws" (p. 12). But, as always, we try to move beyond such habitual ways of seeing the region. In "The Three Sisters," Jane Mt.Pleasant describes the lessons that time-honored Iroquois farming practices have for today (p. 26), and in her piece, Speer explores the various ways cooks have developed gourmet Appalachian cuisine.

So we invite you to pull up a chair and savor this issue. Personally, though, I'd recommend reading it on a full stomach.

— Jane Harris Woodside, editor

Letters to the editor:

Northern Appalachia

I am eager to tell you that I deeply appreciate your special issue [Winter 1997] on Northern Appalachia. As a native of Knoxville in East Tennessee, I have written a good deal of fiction about the region, but I never really realized, until about 10 years ago, why I felt more at home in Eastern Kentucky, West Virginia, Western Pennsylvania and New York than in the flatter Southeastern states.

Once I came to that realization, I felt that all of Appalachia, north and south, should be one state as a way of unifying the culture and solving the political problems of isolation and thus some of the economic problems that derive from a history of isolation and neglect. The potential of the region for itself and the nation has never been realized. Almost everything one can say about Appalachia, north and south, can be illuminated by a study of forces set in motion in the decades before, during, and after the Civil War.

By focusing on the North, you dramatically raise once again the broader question of Appalachia's nature, history, and future. You also lay the groundwork for the next best thing to a single state by posing questions that may enable North and South Appalachia to work together in some of the ways people within a single state pursue common cultural, historic, political, and economic goals.

David Madden, Director
The U.S. Civil War Center
Louisiana State University
Baton Rouge, La.

The idea that Ithaca, N.Y., is part of Appalachia is laughable. People in that area (I lived there 30 years) do not relate to the mountains, do not consider themselves Appalachians, and are culturally part of New York City. The only supporters of this pernicious fiction would be local congressmen, eager for "Appalachian" aid money, which they neither need nor deserve.

David Wallace
Christiansburg, Va.

Letters to the editor should be sent with the writer's name, address, and daytime phone number to: Editor, Now & Then, *ETSU, Box 70556, Johnson City TN 37614 or e-mail woodsidj@etsu.edu. Letters may be edited for length and clarity before publication.*

Oops

I am sure your editorial staff has already been informed that you have Saint Louis playing baseball in the World Series in the wrong year.

Sarah Legg Schoon
St. Louis, Mo.

Actually, the sharp-eyed Ms. Schoon was the first and only person to let us know that in "The Girard Theater" (Winter 1997, p. 19), Chick Fullis was credited with hitting .400 in the 1936 World Series when it should have been in 1934. By the way, the Cardinals took the series from Detroit in seven games that year.

AN Appetite FOR Life

BY Michael Barrick

For the Italian-Americans of Clarksburg, W.Va., eating is a full-time occupation.

The conversations here are more animated than they are just about anywhere else in Appalachia. The hands move about more, the voices rise to a higher pitch, and the arms reach out to pull you closer.

And the food, for certain, is spicier.

It's Italian — not your chain restaurant Italian, where the spaghetti sauce comes out of a No. 10 can. It's genuine, just like the people. In fact, that's what makes Clarksburg, W.Va. — where the population is, it seems, entirely Italian — so thoroughly Appalachian: The people are the real article. They're caring. They know the difference between right and wrong. They value family and friends and the blessings of relationships. They understand grace; they dispense mercy.

Even a claustrophobic would stand patiently in the overstuffed lobby for as long as it takes to step up to the counter and purchase a loaf of Italian bread.

But most of all, they eat, and they gather, and then they eat some more. A never-ending meal it is, where food, to be sure, is critical but ultimately it is just a draw, really, a magnet to pull everyone together.

In Clarksburg, you will find Tomaro's Bakery. Then there are also dozens of "gen-u-wine" Italian restaurants in the area. And each and every Labor Day weekend, this small town nestled in the rolling Alleghenies of the north-central portion of the Mountain State hosts one fine Italian Heritage Festival.

Nowhere is the all importance of food more apparent than at Tomaro's Bakery. A visit to this tiny business is as much a lesson in Italian heritage as is the more elaborate festivities of late summer.

Tomaro's has been around as long as anyone can remember. Even a claustrophobic would stand patiently in the overstuffed lobby — barely 50 square feet and jammed with patrons from open to close — for as long as it takes to step up to the counter and purchase a loaf of Italian bread, crisp on the outside but soft and warm on the inside, steaming just under the thin crust. That's because from the moment a customer opens the door, tempting aromas inundate the cramped and lively lobby: of fresh — really *fresh* — baked bread, of miniature loaves wrapped around a stick of pepperoni (known as pepperoni rolls), and of pizza shells just waiting for tomato sauce and toppings.

A century earlier, these bakers' ancestors landed on Ellis Island in New York Harbor and blazed their own trail of the Hillbilly Highway. The Hillbilly Highway is a collection of two-lane roads running south from Clarksburg into northern Georgia and linking Central and Southern Appalachia with urban areas that attracted many of the mountain natives with the promise of jobs. Normally a pejorative term, it really should be con-

sidered a term of endearment because it is populated along the way with wonderful folks who still value family, friends, and hearth.

These Italians came with finely developed skills in glass-blowing and with a willingness to work hard, as evidenced by their labors in the coal mines. More importantly, they arrived with a zest for life, sometimes matched but never surpassed.

The intimacy of eating together, combined with the warmth and affection that is as embracing as an early Mediterranean sun, compel all to stay just a bit longer, to order one more beer, to ask for another hoagie.

Tomaro's is often the hub of that appetite for life.

Non-Italians, of course, are welcome and undoubtedly generate a sizable portion of the establishment's income. But it is the folks just two or three generations removed from the Old Country who provide the character and flavor.

Before the proprietor even opens her mouth to shout out the order to the bakers in the back or to ask the customer what he or she wants, her hands have begun speaking a language of their own. The drop or wave of the hand serves as an exclamation point. She bags the requested three loaves of hard-crust bread, the two loaves of soft, sliced bread, the pizza shells, and the dozen pepperoni rolls with the same graceful motions that had been used by the glass blowers just decades earlier.

Though Italy is still very much close to their hearts and in their thoughts, this now is home. To leave this patch of West Virginia would almost be an affront to the family. Indeed, it wasn't too long ago that marrying somebody who didn't have an Italian surname or who wasn't Roman Catholic was unthinkable. In some families, it still is.

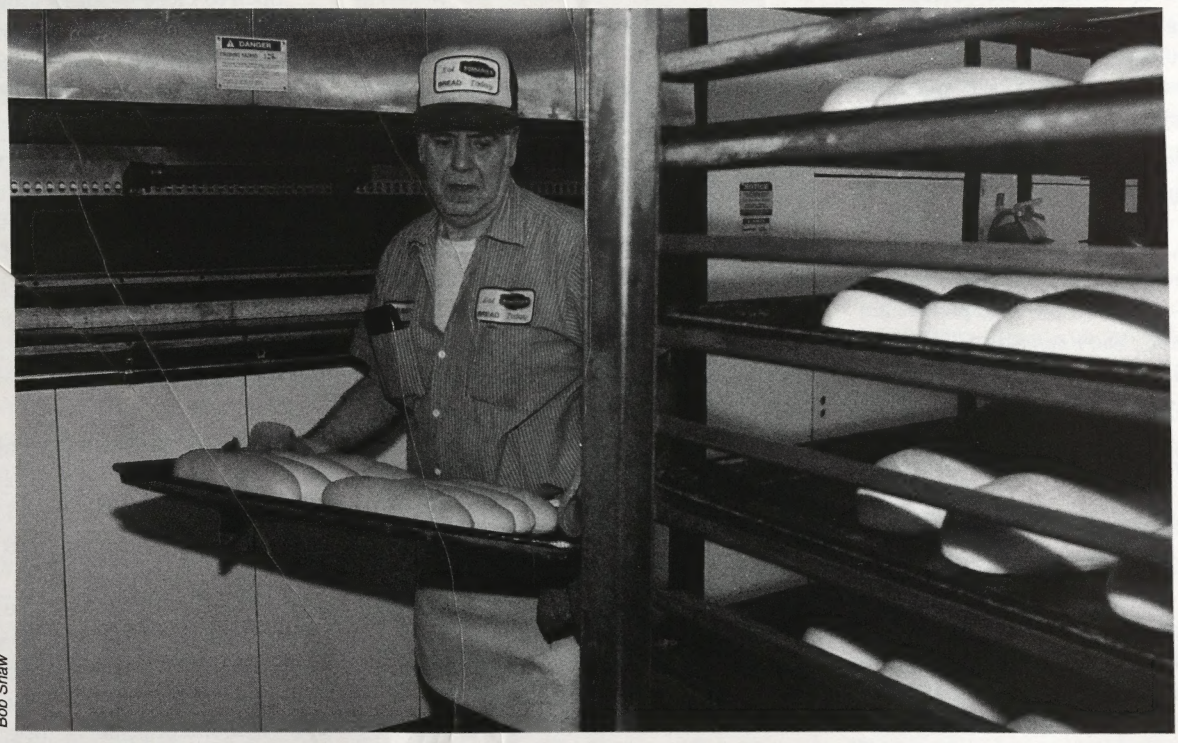
Yet, those of Irish descent, such as myself, or of some other background are received — literally — with open arms. It helps that a customer won't be in a hurry. The aroma of fresh bread envelops the occasional visitor and the regular patron alike. Those regular patrons are guys with names like Dominick and Vincent. They wrap their leathery hands around your shoulder and pull you in close to their sides. Their own shoulders bounce up and down as they talk, catching you up on the latest news.

Across town, later in the evening, many of the same folks you squeeze past in the narrow doorway will likely be seen at restaurants such as Twin Oaks or Minard's. In the back dining room at Twin Oaks on old U.S. Route 50 — just down from the endless row of fast food joints — conversations will range from low whispers to boisterous laughter. Someone is likely to pull a chair over to your table, someone like the Rev. Larry Cann, a retired Catholic priest in his late 60s.

As others twist their forks around the pasta or sip on a cold brew, Cann shares stories of folks he's met along the way. Each memory, each visit, each person becomes a story for him — as it does for so many of these folks.

Tomaro's has been around as long as anyone can remember.

The story is best told over food. The intimacy of eating together, combined with the warmth and affection that is as em-



Bob Shaw

Hurley Riffle removes Italian bread from the oven at Tomaro's Bakery.

bracing as an early Mediterranean sun, compel all to stay just a bit longer, to order one more beer, to ask for another hoagie.

Still, it's not enough. So the Italian-Americans of Clarksburg began the Italian Heritage Festival about 20 years ago, a marvelous end to the summer. Unlike many festivals, though, it's not a tourist attraction. Sure, many folks are drawn here because of it, but the festival is really a celebration of Italian culture by Italians for Italians.

The festival is really a celebration of Italian culture by Italians for Italians. The streets shut down for days, lined with tables covered with breads, pastas, and wine. There's dancing and singing—a good party.

Celebrate they do. The streets shut down for days, lined with tables covered with breads, pastas, and wine. There's dancing and singing—a good party.

It's worth a visit. Men standing in a circle play a maddening game. They holler out numbers—in the native tongue of their immigrant ancestors—while they beat their left hands and display the number with the fingers of their right hands. It all looks as if it will break into a fight any second. Women in flowing dresses bounce across the stage while thousands in the street clap in unison to the tune familiar only to those with names ending in "o" or "i."

The striking zest for life found among these people seems to have stimulated a resurgence in Clarksburg, where at one time buildings crumbled a bit more each year. Now, though, the town is recapturing its old charm, preserved all these years, it seems, because of the willingness of residents to stay at the table.

These people of Italian ancestry bring a smile to a gray day, a boisterous laugh to a quiet street and, in the case of Tomaro's, a delectable and fragrant essence to any meal. N&T

When Michael Barrick returns to his hometown of Clarksburg, W.Va., his first stop is, more often than not, Tomaro's Bakery. Currently a free-lance journalist living in Granite Falls, N.C., he is the author of a book, The Hillbilly Highway.

© 1998, Michael Barrick

Eating Italian

My soul is deep in Italian juices,
soaking in garlic butter and tomato paste,
thick and tangy with oregano.
My fingers, wrapped in blankets of ravioli,
intertwine with layers of parmesan, mozzarella, ricotta.
Walk into my kitchen and you will find me
baptized in olive oil and wearing the perfume
of crushed grapes on my shoulders.
Listen to the song of spaghetti singing on my stove
with fettucini Alfredo, and let yourself
be overcome by lasagna and macaroni.
Put your hands to my oven
and feel the warmth of rising bread,
loaves and crusts, dough spilling
out onto the tiles of the counter.
Fill your glass with rosemary, currant,
and melt your spirit into paradise.

—Allison Cooper

Allison Cooper, from Nashville, is a junior honors student at Carson-Newman College in Jefferson City, Tenn. She is studying English and photography and hopes to pursue graduate studies in creative writing before teaching English at the college level. Cooper has been published in Mossy Creek Reader.

Uppity MOUNTAIN *Cooking*

Top-notch Appalachian chefs and entrepreneurs measure themselves against the standard of Granny's home cooking.

Haute cuisine and Appalachia ...

I know, I know. You're chuckling at the very notion of *haute cuisine* and *Appalachia* being uttered in the same breath. The stereotype of Appalachian cooking evokes images of sausage, biscuits, gravy, and fried pies at its best — and variations of roadkill cooking (possums and the like) at its worst. But the Appalachian region has produced its fair share of fine cooks and fine foods. It has also become, in recent years, a magnet for first-rate chefs and excellent restaurants.

Some cases in point: There is Ashe County, N.C., native Gayle Winston who returned to her home territory some 25 years ago to open an award-winning inn and restaurant. Sassie Coleman is yet another native daughter who has come back to the mountains. Like Winston, Coleman has recycled an old building — this time, a Johnson City, Tenn., school — and transformed it into a factory producing gourmet foods.

By now, the story of Chef James Welch and his partners Jimmy and Carolyn Crippen should begin to sound familiar. Together, they bought and restored an old inn in Blowing Rock, N.C., which they now operate as a well-respected inn and restaurant. The only difference this time around is that these restaurateurs are imports: Welch originally hails from Greensboro, N.C., while Jimmy and Carolyn Crippen grew up in Miami, Fla., and Brooklyn, N.Y., respectively.

Then there are the professional cooks Appalachia has exported to other parts of the country. Two homegrown gourmet chefs who have become familiar across the country from their shows on the TV Food Network are Jack McDavid of *Grillin' and Chillin'* fame and Dean Fearing of *Dining At Home with Dean Fearing*. Though he spends a good portion of time in Philadelphia, McDavid still calls Clinchport, Va., near Kingsport, Tenn., home, while Dean Fearing grew up in Ashland, Ky.

From Accounting to Cooking

Owner of two restaurants in Philadelphia, Jack's Firehouse and the Down Home Diner, Jack McDavid grew up eating good country cooking in Southwest Virginia's mountains. He took a circuitous route to his cooking career — by way of an accounting major at the University of Virginia.

"I started working my way through school by doing book-

"I'VE WORKED IN OVER 100 DIFFERENT RESTAURANTS WITH PEOPLE WHO WERE SUPPOSED TO BE THE BEST CHEFS IN THE WORLD, AND NOT ONE OF THEM COULD HOLD A LIGHT TO MY MOTHER'S COOKING."

— Jack McDavid

JEAN HASKELL SPEER

Jack's Firehouse

Jack McDavid, who came to cooking by way of accounting, wears his trademark bib overalls and cap.

keeping for a restaurant," he recalls. "I fell in love with the business, and I went into the kitchen and started working. After about five years, they called me a chef. I figured I didn't really know as much as a chef would, so I started working at other restaurants, trying to learn all I could. I have been doing that ever since."

Instead of attending culinary school, he got his training in the "school of hard knocks," acquiring enough knowledge and skill along the way to find himself cooking for such notables as Queen Elizabeth II, Jimmy Carter, Anwar Sadat, and Menachem Begin and in such elegant settings as Le Lion D'Or in Washington, D.C., and Le Bec-Fin in Philadelphia. Despite his success, McDavid still retains his Southwest Virginia accent and still cooks in bib overalls and wears a cap that expresses support for local farmers.

He credits his mountain roots with helping him appreciate fine food. "I've worked in over 100 different restaurants with people who were supposed to be the best chefs in the world," he reports, "and not one of them could hold a light to my mother's cooking. The only two people who ever gave my mother competition were my grandmothers on both sides."

McDavid says that what he learned from his family background was "good, real simple" cooking and the importance of trying to find food "as close and as fresh and as good as I can." His parents, Okley and Mary McDavid, produced all their own food on their small farm: growing and preserving vegetables and fruit, slaughtering and curing meats, making molasses, gathering nuts, hunting game, and fishing. McDavid discovered early in his career that much of his success came from the remarkable flavor of local produce. "If you spent more time in the tomato box than you did on the tomato vine, you wouldn't have much flavor either," he observes dryly.

This desire for freshness led McDavid to work with local Delaware Valley farmers, encouraging them to grow what he needed, including such specialties as *haricots verts,* a small variety of green bean. He does his own canning and pickling. His zeal for encouraging local producers has led him to do a benefit for the American Farmland Trust, a conservation group that works to save farmland from urban sprawl and to help farmers improve stewardship of their land.

At his highly successful Down Home Diner in a corner of a renovated 19th century train shed in the heart of Center City, McDavid introduces Philadelphia to buttermilk biscuits (made with White Lily flour, once advertised as "too good for a Yankee"), sawmill gravy, homemade sausage, ham with his own special cure, stewed apples, fried potatoes, and sorghum molasses. "When I do squirrel or chinquapins [the edible nut of a variety of beech tree which he pronounces *chinkypins*], they look at me like I am crazy. But when they start eating, they don't set their knife and fork down until they are finished. And where I come from, that is kind of a compliment."

At his acclaimed Jack's Firehouse, located in a converted firehouse, McDavid experiments with what some have termed American "haute country" cuisine. His menu on any given day might include black-eyed pea-and-hamhock soup, spicy venison sausage, rainbow trout with garlic shrimp and fried leeks, and a fried chicken salad with buttermilk dressing.

Says McDavid, "There's a lot of touches of flavor or soul or heart that comes from the mountains in my cooking." His creativity with the freshest local foods has brought this Virginia boy cooking honors, and his down-home persona makes him stand out among other recognized chefs.

Standing Out in a Crowd

McDavid recalls a trip to Aspen, Colo., to receive a 1990 award from *Food and Wine* magazine as one of the top 10 chefs in America. He wore his bib overalls, and "somehow, that thin air made my accent just as thick as molasses on a cold winter day.

"There have been many times the 'dumb accent' has worked for me," McDavid points out. He also favors rural attire. For example, in group pictures, there is McDavid in his overalls, standing out among the other chefs decked out in nearly identi-

"THERE'S BETTER COOKS IN THE APPALACHIANS THAN IN MOST AREAS BECAUSE IT IS A REAL 'SALT-OF-THE-EARTH' AREA WHERE FOOD IS IMPORTANT."

— Dean Fearing

The Mansion on Turtle Creek

Dean Fearing, who hails from Ashland, Ky., adds twists of the mountains to the Southwestern cuisine he prepares at The Mansion on Turtle Creek in Dallas, Texas.

cal crisp white shirts and checkered pants, "Everybody knew who that guy in the bib overalls was, so I thought it was a pretty good marketing tool."

McDavid comes home to the mountains every month or so to visit his folks. He aspires to capture his heritage in his cooking. "I turn out over 10,000 meals a week in my restaurants, and I love my food. But the love that my grandmothers and my mother put on each plate has never been touched."

Asked about other culinary artists who have come from Appalachia, McDavid notes, "There is another very prominent chef, a boy by the name of Dean Fearing down in Dallas, Texas. He works with Southwestern cuisine, but you can see twists of the mountains in his food, too. And if you get him talking, his accent comes back real quick."

Fabulous Country Cooks

Dean Fearing *is* a prominent chef, the chef of The Mansion on Turtle Creek. Fearing has won such awards as the Culinary Institute of America Chef of the Year, the James Beard Award, the *Wine Spectator* Grand Award, and Mobil Five-Star Awards (for the restaurant). He has been guest chef at the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame Awards in Cleveland, Ohio, has made numerous television appearances in addition to his regular show, and written two cookbooks. Organizers for the James Beard Awards dinner chose him as this year's Executive Chef. He, like McDavid, has cooked for Queen Elizabeth and for Presidents Bush and Clinton.

Fearing became familiar with kitchens early in his life. His father, Tom, was manager of Ashland, Ky.'s Henry Clay Hotel. Fearing and his brother Greg grew up sweeping floors, washing pots and pans, and cleaning salads. As they got older, the brothers cooked more often — at the grill station or working breakfast. Eventually, after a move to the Midwest, his father introduced Fearing to a master chef, Harvey Colgin, who influenced his decision to attend one of the premiere culinary schools, the Culinary Institute of America in Hyde Park, N.Y.

Like McDavid, Fearing credits his great-grandmother Lydia Wright and his grandmother Lyda Fearing with "introducing me to my taste buds." Says Fearing, "I had grandmothers who were fabulous country cooks. That's how my interest came about, just by eating good food. Sunday meals in the summertime were always from my grandmothers' gardens. Nothing could beat that." He recalls fried chicken, mashed potatoes, "the greatest of all Kentucky baked beans," baked ham with molasses sauce, and fresh garden vegetables.

Most of Fearing's restaurant specialties today derive from Southwestern cuisine. Still at times, he acknowledges, "We'll put Granny Fearing baked beans, Granny Fearing country green beans on the menu — things that I remember from my grandmother's meals." He also does a version of Granny Fearing's red-eye gravy. "It's not like my grandmother made it, which was to take the strongest coffee in the world and pour it in a pan and cook the old ham — I mean, that was it. We have taken the gravy some steps further to make it into a more restaurant sauce, and people love it."

According to Fearing, "There's better cooks in the Appalachians than in most areas because it is a real 'salt-of-the-earth' area where food is important. In my grandmother's meals, everything was seasoned well. Everything was cooked correctly, and flavor was very important. What I think the region has to offer is just great food."

> "WHEN I MOVED BACK TO THE MOUNTAINS, MY INTENTION WAS TO SIT ON THE PORCH AND ROCK AND HAVE A GARDEN AND CAN THINGS AND WALK IN THE WOODS—AND LOOK WHAT I'VE GOTTEN INTO!"
>
> **— Gayle Winston**

Fearing and McDavid both think their success has come not just from a heritage of good mountain cooking but from the values they learned growing up. Says Fearing, "I was raised right by my parents and by both sides of grandparents. They were people from deep in Eastern Kentucky, and my personality is part of that." Reflecting on his phenomenal success as a chef, Fearing concludes, "If it weren't for my grandmothers, I probably wouldn't be here today."

Amy Johnson

Gayle Winston serves up a triple chocolate and praline marjolaine wedding cake.

Coming Back Home

Gayle Winston left her home in the North Carolina mountains in 1953 for work in New York City, first as a researcher for *Time Magazine* and ultimately as a producer of Broadway plays. She lived in Los Angeles for many years before returning to North Carolina in 1973. She recalls once meeting cartoonist Al Capp in New York. Learning she was from the mountains, Capp asked Winston if she was from Dogpatch. "No," she replied, "but I lived in Dog *Creek.*"

Dog Creek is in North Carolina's Ashe County where Winston grew up as Glenna Gayle Hamby in a family that had been in the mountains for 10 generations. It is to Ashe County that she has returned. "When I moved back to the mountains, I bought my great-grandpa's house over in Grassy Creek. My intention was to sit on the porch and rock and have a garden and can things and walk in the woods — and look what I've gotten into!"

What Winston has gotten into is the River House Inn in Grassy Creek, located in a restored 1870s-vintage house on 126 acres of mountain land along the North Fork of the New River. The inn is noted for its award-winning restaurant, where the food presentation, says one restaurant critic, is "always elegant." Like McDavid and Fearing, Winston says her culinary journey began with eating good food prepared by her mother, Zetta Rose Barker Hamby, and grandmother Lizzie Hamby.

Zetta Rose Hamby, a school teacher in a small mountain school, "made biscuits every single morning. She would open the biscuits left over that evening and sauté them in butter, then use them for supper," a practice Winston continues with English muffins in her inn.

Winston says her food memories are generally of her grandmother's cooking. "My grandmother made one thing that I keep wanting to duplicate: a stack cake." She remembers her grandmother drying apples in the sun on top of the woodshed, then making the applesauce that she spread between nine layers of large molasses "cookies." Explains Winston, "You have to let it 'meller' for a couple of days, and it is just wonderful, with the cinnamon and all that."

In Winston's childhood, most of her family's diet consisted of fresh vegetables and wild fruits, augmented by ham, sausage, and game meats such as rabbit. She remembers her grandmother's pea dumplings, "like chicken and dumplings, except instead of chicken, it was made with dumplings and fresh peas."

New Twists

When Winston left the mountains, she was introduced to a wider variety of foods that excited and changed her tastes. When she first got to New York, she informed an acquaintance that "garlic was something that cows ate that ruined the milk." The event that turned Winston into a cook, she says, occurred at a dinner in the New York apartment of director Sidney Lumet. "This beautiful woman had cooked the most delicious food, and I was so impressed. She said, 'Just buy this book and read it, and you can't go wrong.' It was then the only edition of *Gourmet Magazine's Cookbook,* a fat volume that I still have and have used for so much."

Although Winston describes her current style of cooking as "a little more uppity" than mountain cooking, she does preparations such as rainbow trout "very simply, not fussy." She does make homemade pickles, jams, and jellies and hopes to have an orchard with old-fashioned varieties of apples. In one of the most interesting twists on Appalachian fare, Winston pickles ramps, an onion-like variety of a wild lily with a powerful flavor and an equally powerful scent, to serve instead of cornichons (a small sour pickle) with patés and as a substitute for onions in martinis.

Like McDavid and Fearing, Winston works with local farmers to help supply her with the fresh produce she needs. Winston says she likes to encourage her neighbors to grow a more diverse variety of crops than they're currently producing. "It's hard to cook with tobacco," she notes.

While Winston believes that cooking in Appalachia has suffered from the invasion of supermarkets and fast food restau-

Wayne Speer

Gayle Winston's River House Inn is a restored 19th century house that sits on 126 acres in Ashe County, N.C.

Debbie DeVita

Chef James Welch and Carolyn and Jimmy Crippen moved to the mountains from Florida. Jimmy Crippen's family had been visiting Blowing Rock, N.C., where Crippen's Country Inn and Restaurant is located, regularly in the summer from the time he was 12 years old.

rants, a sentiment she shares with McDavid, she sees a new trend of trained chefs moving into the region. "I think the quality of life is so… I don't know if *exciting* is the right word, but I think it is. I think it's wonderful that you are getting someone who is a graduate of the Culinary Institute of America or the New England Culinary School who wants to live and work here in the mountains."

Homespun Luxury

One of those trained chefs who has come to the region is James Welch of Crippen's Country Inn and Restaurant in Blowing Rock, N.C. Back in 1995, Welch, executive chef, and partners Jimmy and Carolyn Crippen, who manage the inn, all left Mark's Place in North Miami, Fla., one of the top restaurants in the country. They were all motivated by a desire to enjoy the quality of life the mountains have to offer.

For the Crippens, running the inn is a dream come true. Jimmy Crippen's family began coming to Blowing Rock every summer when he was 12 years old and, as an adult, he fantasized about making the small North Carolina town his permanent home. In 1994, the Crippens bought and restored an old Blowing Rock boarding house and opened the inn and restaurant in 1995. The underlying principle, Crippen says, is "homespun luxury."

Even though the Crippen-Welch team is a transplant, Crippen notes that regional foods very much influence the food preparation at the restaurant. They use trout from local trout farms, blueberries, apples, walnuts, chestnuts, plums, pears, and cherries from the Crippen family place in Blowing Rock and, Crippen says, "We grow all our edible flowers and our herbs at the inn."

Critics have described the food served at Crippen's as "the best food in North Carolina," characterized by "innovative combinations and stunning presentations." The inventive menu draws from local suppliers for such delicacies as baby salad greens and ostrich, raised in the North Carolina mountains; other foods unavailable locally are shipped in. A typical menu might include Napoleon of foie gras, black truffle and oxtail with chestnut crepes or applewood-smoked, bacon-wrapped grilled loin of venison with acorn squash, summer vegetables, and mango chutney. The quality of food has earned the Crippen-Welch team national attention, such as the honor of preparing dinner at the prestigious James Beard House in New York in 1997.

Updating Grandmother's Strawberry Butter

The appeal of gourmet food is influencing other mountain businesses. Tiring of big city life, Sassie Coleman came back to Johnson City, Tenn., after working in Atlanta and Chicago. She now produces a line of gourmet jellies, jams, and marmalades that are sold nationwide. After attending high school and college in her home area, Coleman's design work in Atlanta led to set decoration experience on films such as *Driving Miss Daisy.* When the film work led to Chicago — where she worked on projects such as *Home Alone* and *A League of Their Own* — she also found a new profession as product designer for Nieman-Marcus and other upscale department stores.

After learning how to design, develop, and market products, Coleman transformed an old school building in Johnson City into the Austin Springs Jellorium, billed as the "maker of legendary foods and gifts." She first targeted the corporate gift-giving market, one whose requirements she researched thoroughly. She learned, "Food is never the wrong size, it's never the wrong

Jerry Burns

An old Blowing Rock, N.C., boarding house has been transformed by the Crippens into "homespun luxury" with an inventive menu using locally grown delicacies.

color, it's never inappropriate. It's never too personal." Her success with the corporate market led to a demand for her gourmet gifts in stores; she now distributes her products to some 250 retail outlets, including a shop at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C.

Her inspiration, not surprisingly, was her grandmother Carrie Sue Church. "I suppose my product could have been anything," Coleman muses. "It could have been barbecue sauce; it could have been pickled vegetables. But what I knew was stirring apple butter and making strawberry jelly: the things my grandmother taught me."

Sassy Coleman posed for the trademark label design for her unique brand of jams and jellies. By updating her grandmother's recipes, Coleman reaches out to the gourmet market from the old school building she converted in the Austin Springs community in Washington County, Tenn.

Coleman takes her grandmother's recipes and updates them, based on her knowledge of what American chefs are doing with textures and flavors. She says her grandmother, for example, made strawberry butter. "Where she would make strawberry butter, we make strawberry champagne butter with macadamia nuts. We're just updating."

After having conducted research in the Center for Appalachian Studies and Services' Archives of Appalachia at East Tennessee State University, Coleman based the design of her products' packaging on the story of Austin Springs. The design,

> "I SUPPOSE MY PRODUCT COULD HAVE BEEN ANYTHING, BUT WHAT I KNEW WAS STIRRING APPLE BUTTER AND MAKING STRAWBERRY JELLY: THE THINGS MY GRANDMOTHER TAUGHT ME."
> **— Sassie Coleman**

which features both photographs of Coleman herself in nostalgic rural poses as well as old pictures of dinner-on-the-ground held in Austin Springs, emphasizes the homemade quality of the product and the small-town mountain values the product embodies. Coleman explains, "We cook it in big kettles on a big gas range. We make about 400 jars a day. It's all made by hand, and it's hand labeled. Every jar is numbered on the top like a fine wine. That's the integrity of this product."

Echoing other Appalachian cooks, Coleman believes strongly in relying on local farmers for the bulk of her food supply, arguing that "there would be no sense in doing this if we were buying our products from other parts of the country." She once helped arrange the harvest of a local farmer's crop of black raspberries when he was hospitalized.

Passionate about the role of food in preserving heritage, Coleman calls Appalachia "a spiritual home, a place that nurtures so many people. I think that is what comes across in our products."

Appalachia has nurtured, in one way or another, all these creators of fine foods, who stir their pots in rural mountain towns and in huge American cities. It is Appalachia that makes their cuisine a tantalizing mix of flavors and textures, values and memories. Their cooking is always in some part a tribute to Appalachia's land and people.

It's enough to make you stop laughing when you hear *haute cuisine* and *Appalachia* paired in the same sentence. N&T

Jean Haskell Speer, director of the Center, loves good food and spirited drinks. She and husband Wayne, an uppity mountain cook, are working on a book on haute cuisine and folk tradition.

Sausage

I think of the pig's last day:
rutting and rooting, pressing
round snout to earth, finally

so full of himself he falls asleep
wearing his sun-dried suit
made of mud.

I think of the countless times
I have eaten his brethren:
fried with eggs;

linked and pattied,
smoked and spiced;
crumbled in brown gravy

ladled over biscuits.
I think of my mother
scrambling breakfast together

for a brother who transformed
our kitchen table into trough.

—Charley Hively Jr.

Born in Nitro, W.Va., Charley Hively Jr. currently works as the reference librarian at the Clarksburg-Harrison Public Library, in Clarksburg, W.Va. He also serves as an adjunct professor of English for Fairmont State College, Fairmont, W.Va. His poems have won several awards and, most recently, his collection "Another Eden" took first place in the WV Writers' Annual Spring Competition. "Sausage" is his first published poem.

Of Possums & Papaws

Joel Davis

Two members of an East Tennessee family still take to the road to bring home a slightly greasy regional delicacy.

Possum doesn't taste like chicken—no, sir. It tastes neither fowl nor foul. And like everything else that has ended up on my Papaw's table over the years—from squirrel to bull testicles—I have eaten possum several times. The secret to dining with my maternal grandfather is to chew quickly, swallow fast, and only then, ask what it was you just ate.

Now, my reputation as a ravenous possum eater is probably undeserved, stemming as it does from certain apocryphal tales of my childhood: family myths telling of epic dinners at Papaw's house during which I gobbled portions of our nation's most identifiable marsupial between chants of "more possum, Papaw, more possum!"

Still, truth be known, I have smacked my lips several times since upon a meal of our much maligned *Didelphis marsupialis.* After discussing these meals with Papaw, I have come to realize that these days, a lowly possum will likelier end up as a speed bump on our public highways than as an entrée on the tables of our well-fed populace. "People don't hardly eat 'em no more," Papaw says. "I don't know of anyone around here that still eats 'em."

Papaw still eats them, though—eats them and enjoys them, too. "They're all good," he says. "I'd rather have a possum than a groundhog." The thought of all the poor people who never have—and probably never will—eat a possum dinner inexplicably saddens me, and so, on this lukewarm autumn day, I have undertaken the task of writing a guide for those who wish to partake of the plethora of possums to be found in our fair land.

The first step on the journey to a meal of possum is the most profound one. This step involves catching a possum. Now, there are two schools of thought on how to catch a possum. One approach is to cruise the back roads of your neighborhood at night in the comfort of your car until you glimpse your prey scuttling across the road and either run over him or jump out and chase the rascal down. If you choose the latter option, take a tire iron with you. Of course, while hunting possums from your car is convenient, it probably isn't legal—and it lacks a certain panache.

The traditional way to catch a possum is to take to the woods with your hunting dog some moonlit night during possum season, which extends from November to February in Tennessee. Possums love the taste of a ripe persimmon. So the best time and place to catch a possum is in a persimmon tree after the fruit has ripened, which is usually around the first frost. "Yeah-boy," Papaw says. "Coons like the persimmons too."

When I asked Papaw about persimmons, he drove me up the hill on his farm, and we gathered some prematurely ripe persimmons from under a lonely tree. Afterwards, while driving over to his brother Joe's farm to look for a possum to catch, I tried a persimmon or two and was struck by the distinct mellowness of the fruit. The texture of the pulp was soft and smooth against my tongue and the roof of my mouth.

A lowly possum will likelier end up as a speed bump on our public highways than as an entrée on the tables of our well-fed populace.

At any rate, after you've located a possum in a persimmon, or in any other tree, the question is "what now?"

"You just climb the tree and shake 'em out," Papaw says. "They're out on a limb, so just shake it so they'll turn loose. I'd have to shoot one out now, though, 'cause I can't climb."

"I can climb," I say, remembering family myths of my half-

squirrel heritage. Later that day, I found myself teetering along the limbs of a hollow tree. Papaw had caught possums out of it before so it seemed like a good place to check. No possums. On the way out, we did harvest a dozen golf balls that were hidden in the undergrowth like the eggs of some half-crazed fowl.

If you have better luck at finding a possum, Papaw advocates catching the critter alive in order to fatten it up. So leave your gun at home, grab a stick, and take your courage. Despite the impressive dental hardware that the average possum possesses, it is a relatively meek and slow opponent. Just don't underestimate it, and remember to grab it by the tail or back legs. Grabbing a possum by the snout is not considered prudent.

After capturing your future supper, the next step is to put the animals in a clean cage and feed them well, says my Mamaw. "We put them up in a cage for about six weeks and feed them food like we eat," she says. "They'll eat milk and bread and vegetables — they love vegetables. We feed them up like that for a while, and then we kill them."

But how to kill a possum? The next few steps are not for the squeamish. To kill the possum humanely, Papaw suggests laying a stick across the animal's neck, standing on both ends of the stick, and picking it up by the hind legs. This will break its neck and minimize the suffering.

To dress the possum, immerse it in very hot but not boiling water for one minute. Afterwards, scrape the skin with a dull knife to remove the hair. Be careful not to cut the skin.

Next, slit the carcass from neck to hind legs with a sharp knife and remove its innards (this should prove to be the most popular step so far). Wash the possum thoroughly inside and out with hot water and remove the head and tail. Cover it with cold water mixed with a cup of salt, and let it stand overnight. The next day, throw out the salt water and rinse the possum in boiling water.

After cleaning the possum, the most basic recipe is to fill a pan half full of water, place the possum in it, and cover it. Then parboil the possum by heating the pan at high on top of the stove. After the water begins boiling, turn the temperature down and continue parboiling it for one hour; the time varies slightly with the size of the animal. When the meat begins falling apart, the possum is ready for the next step. Place the possum in a roasting pan and surround it with peeled sweet potatoes. Add salt and pepper to taste. Bake the critter at about 350 degrees until it's brown, then pepper and salt it.

At this point, the novice possum-eater must make peace with his or her gustatory expectations. No matter how fervently the eater might wish otherwise, friend possum's dark and greasy meat does *not* resemble chicken or pork in taste or texture. It tastes like possum. According to my decidedly undereducated palette, it resembles pot roast — a greasy, slightly stringy, and benignly gamey pot roast. As to what to serve with the possum, you can eat it with pinto beans or green beans or potatoes, Mamaw says.

In the end, while possum is much maligned, it can still provide a tasty meal and, at least for me, a possum dinner is the stuff of which fond memories are made. So take a chance. Go find a persimmon tree some moonlit night and settle yourself down to wait for our old friend, the possum. N&T

Joel Davis is a former Now & Then *intern who has moved on to become a reporter for a small daily newspaper in East Tennessee. He spends his spare time prowling used bookstores and dining upon small woodland creatures with his maternal grandfather Bruce Samples.*

Jack Davis

Joel Davis and his papaw Bruce Samples discuss the merits of the various ways to cook a possum.

There's More Than One Way to Cook a Possum

Slade's Roasted Roadkill

This possum recipe was contributed by Slade of the group Red Knuckles and the Trailblazers; it can be found in The Bluegrass Music Cookbook *by Penny Parsons, Ken Beck, and Jim Clark, published by John F. Blair. For a review, see page 34.*

Good with red-eye gravy.

Run over 1 possum or armadillo on the highway. Clean it and put in on the engine of your car. Drive 80 miles an hour for 50 miles. Get out, turn the possum (or armadillo) over, and drive for another 50 miles at 80 miles an hour. Then your possum or armadillo will be done, and you have dinner. Cooking time will vary depending on whether you have a 6-cylinder engine or a V-8.

Makes 1 to 3 servings, depending on whether you have a 6-cylinder engine or a V-8.

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Kitchens

by Heather Ann Ackley Bean

The worn pages of an old family cookbook allow a young woman to find her place in a long line of women from Appalachian Ohio.

My great-grandmother, Bernice Mabel Waller Ackley, died in a Canton, Ohio, nursing home in March 1984, just a few months before my graduation from a suburban Cleveland high school.

Though my paternal great-grandparents lived well into my late childhood, I only knew them as old and somewhat frail middle-class, suburban Midwesterners. I certainly never had a sense of them as "Appalachian," though Bernice and her husband Samuel "Earl" Ackley had both grown up on farms in Noble County, located down in Ohio's hill country on the West Virginia border. Great-grandpa Earl was an educated man and a teacher who took great pride in his wit and intellect. Great-grandma Bernice never talked much or expressed any interests outside of her family. She often seemed to fade into the background.

After Great-grandpa died on Independence Day 1977, great-grandma Bernice moved a short distance from their home in Massillon to an apartment in a senior citizens' complex in Canton. Massillon had been the town where newlyweds Earl and 19-year-old Bernice had settled after they left Appalachian Ohio in 1919. Still, during my teen years, I noticed very little about great-grandma Bernice as an individual, even once she was living on her own, no longer overshadowed by her scholarly, talkative husband. I do remember that she loved pecan cookies and her Slim Whitman records.

> Once I read Bernice's cookbook carefully, I realized that it made clear in ways that I as a wife and mother could understand all too well just how much sheer labor was involved in being a woman on a mountain farm.

To the best of my knowledge, my great-grandmother did not leave behind any significant personal letters or journals that could serve as a record of her thoughts and experiences. The only document that had the potential to connect me with her at all was a thick, blue, hand-bound book with a few recipes handwritten in the front. Because my father, Donovan Ackley II, is the family genealogist, the book had been passed on to him.

The Waller Farm

Ten years after great-grandma Bernice's death, I was a doctoral candidate in the philosophy of religion and theology at Claremont Graduate University in Fontana, Calif., trying (largely in vain) to find primary sources for my research on the role religion played in the lives of Central Appalachian women. When I asked to see Great-grandma's old cookbook, my father had difficulty locating it. He tried to spare me disappointment by warning me that even if he were able to find the old book, there was nothing personal in it, nothing that would give me real insight into her life or who she was.

But on a recent trip back home for my sister's wedding to a man who was originally from West Virginia, my father surprised me not only with the cookbook but also with a trip back to Bernice's childhood home, the Waller farm in Southeast Ohio, near Marietta. On that farm, Bernice had been born to Lenora "Nora" Smith and Elza Waller on April 9, 1900.

Only now that I have had a chance to study the pages of Bernice Waller's cookbook closely have I learned to appreciate its full worth, both to me personally and to the field of Appalachian studies. It is a rare document written by a rural woman of the Appalachian region.

The date written on the inside cover of my great-grandmother Bernice's cookbook suggests that she may have begun to compile recipes from her mother Nora some three months before her wedding to Earl Ackley in 1918. By the time I was born in 1966, great-great-grandma Nora had already moved from the Noble County family farm to a small house with electricity and running water in the little town of Beverly, just a few miles away over the line in Washington County.

Courtesy of Donovan Waller Ackley, II

Shortly before she married Earl Ackley, Bernice Mabel Waller had this portrait taken. She was 17 years old.

Since I was only two years old when Great-great-grandma died, I don't remember Nora, had never tasted her cooking, and had never seen her farm kitchen until that warm, clear mid-October day just after my sister's wedding when Daddy drove my husband, my infant daughter, and me out to the old Waller homestead. The road to that farm is still unpaved and, except for a few electric poles and wires along the forested, gently rolling hills, the view is much as it must have been when Bernice's mother Nora, standing at her work table, looked out her kitchen window at the farm of her own mother, Nancy Gessell Smith, half a mile over the hillside. Since that day, I have imagined Nora thinking of her mother Nancy as she looked out of the Waller farm's kitchen window at the Smith farm, repeating chores and preparing recipes that she had probably learned in her mother's kitchen.

Memories

Conversations and correspondence with my grandparents Don and Anna Mae Workinger Ackley and with my dad helped me to compensate for the absence of my own memories, providing a lively backdrop for my first reading of great-grandma Bernice's cookbook: grandma Anna's memories of Nora Waller sipping pennyroyal or sassafras tea in the farm kitchen; Dad's childhood recollections of tiny Nora chasing her tall, muddy-booted husband Elza out of her kitchen; and images of Nora and her mother Nancy, two women in two kitchens on two farms separated only by a hill and a window.

> The early recipes' lack of cooking times and temperatures were a revelation to me.

They told tales that reflected the hard work and lack of amenities involved in every aspect of food cultivation, preservation, and preparation. All of these family stories and memories gave birth to thoughts of my great-grandmother Bernice as a young girl learning her mother Nora's techniques and recipes just as Nora had been taught by Nancy Gessell Smith, and Nancy had learned from her mother, Sara Carrel Gessell — generation after generation of women engaged in subsistence farming in the hills of the Ohio River Valley.

My grandfather had always told us stories about his Depression-era visits to his grandparents' farm in the hills. The allure of his grandma Nora's cooking always figured prominently in those stories. "As we got closer to the Waller farm, my older brother Ted, my younger sister Norma Jean, and I played the game of who would see the big red barn with the shiny metal roof first. Then we pulled into the drive, past the long, low chicken house and under the spreading branches of the catawba trees," he wrote in a recent letter. The family entered through a screened porch, where the butter churn and cream separator were stored, into the spacious kitchen dominated by a large wrought-iron cook stove.

Grandpa especially remembers being greeted by the smell of Nora's home-cured ham and fresh-baked bread: "She would sit all three of us down on the floor with our backs to the wall so we wouldn't mess up the table so carefully set for the evening meal. She would then take the bread from the warming tray above the wood-fired oven and carve it into thick slices. She would butter each slice from the butter crock on the cellar steps, where it was kept to stay cool, and sprinkle brown sugar from the blue pennant cracker tin box on top to make us bread, butter, and brown sugar

sandwiches." I was raised on those unusual sandwiches myself, especially during weekends with Daddy after my parents' divorce when I was two, but I never knew they came from great-great-grandma Nora's kitchen in Southern Ohio.

Grandpa can still describe that Waller family kitchen in great detail. A large dining table lined with high-backed chairs sat on a braided rug. At the far end of the kitchen, a very small sink and drainboard were used for hand-washing and for some of the food preparation. Even in the 1930s and 1940s, a large water bucket with an enamelware ladle and tin cup held drinking water since the farm never had running water, electricity, central heat, or indoor plumbing. Kerosene lamps provided what light there was, and a 20-foot deep well with a heavy bucket was the only source of water. A small work table held a rolling pin, baking and cooking utensils, and a large jar with "ugly-looking liquid" in it, as Grandpa describes it. That jar held Nora's "starter," which she used instead of yeast. "She always said that was why her bread was better than the store-bought we got at home," Grandpa remembers.

Donovan Waller Ackley

Nora Smith Waller looks over her garden at the Waller homestead in Noble County, Ohio, in 1965.

A Mountain Woman's Life

Nora and young Bernice's kitchen work entailed more than meal preparation. While Elza fed and pastured the farm animals, hitched the mules to plow, and cultivated and harvested crops, Nora was in charge of the chickens. If she found a "setting hen," one who refused to let her eggs be taken, Nora would say, "Bad chickens go to jail!" and put the bird in a cage until she became Sunday dinner. All of the family's meat was grown, slaughtered, and cured at home. Home-canned fruits and vegetables from her garden, milk, butter, eggs, and meat filled the cellar. The nearest grocery store was a "cracker barrel" general store in Crooked-Tree, a few miles down the hill, and the family didn't use it much.

The more I tried to envision what Appalachian farm life might have been like for my great-grandma, the more I realized how difficult it would be for me to understand. Yet at the time, I was living 50 miles east of Los Angeles in the arid foothills of the San Bernardino Mountains, feeling keenly my separation from my family and from the Ohio landscape in which I had grown up. My own homesickness allowed me to believe that I might be able to imagine something of what Bernice Waller Ackley felt. For when she and Earl abandoned Noble County for Massillon, they were the first in five generations to leave Ohio's hill country. She and my great-grandfather, like so many people from Appalachia, moved during the Great Migration, the period from just after World War I until just after World War II when large numbers of rural Southern Americans left their homes and families out of economic necessity to seek employment in Northern and Midwestern cities.

> Grandpa especially remembers being greeted by the smell of Nora's home-cured ham and fresh-baked bread.

I was a graduate student in Southern California and had just married a native Southern Californian, whose paternal grandparents were from the hills of Kentucky, when I read a 1994 Associated Press article about Appalachian Ohio in our local daily newspaper, *The San Bernardino Sun.* It was that article which made me realize the significance of my great-grandparents' move. It certainly afforded my great-grandfather an opportunity for social and professional advancement, but my great-grandmother must have felt a keen sense of loss and displacement.

Once I read Bernice's cookbook carefully, I realized that contrary to my father's assumption that the book would reveal little about her life, it in fact made clear in ways that I as a wife and mother could understand all too well just how much sheer labor was involved in being a woman on a mountain farm. As I reconnect with this heritage, I have begun to enjoy reading cookbooks. I try to bake bread and can my own home-grown fruits and tomatoes, but I embark on these endeavors because I want to do so. For my great-grandmother and her mother, however, nothing about working with food was so voluntary or so leisurely. By the time I'd read halfway down page one, it became obvious that being the family cook meant not only cooking the bacon but home-curing the whole hog.

Recipes and Remedies

The cookbook is divided into several sections, dominated by the blank pages between them. Home remedies and cleaning tips are interspersed with recipes, illustrating both the practicality and, sometimes, the urgency of the family cook's skills and the hardship of a life in which sickness was endured rather than easily treated. The first section is the longest and includes several changes of ink, writing style, and spelling, inconsistencies that may confirm my father's hypothesis that some of the recipes were written by the young Bernice, while others were written for her by her mother Nora. The recipes at the end of

the first section are jarringly different from the rest of the cookbook; they include specific cooking temperatures and store-bought ingredients such as lemon gelatin. I assume those later recipes were written after Bernice and her husband moved to Massillon and had access to a gas or electric stove and a grocery store.

The early recipes' lack of cooking times and temperatures were a revelation to me. I had found my hopes for reconnecting with my great-grandmother by preparing some of her own recipes thwarted by the fact that she simply listed ingredients and gave no hint as to what exactly to do with them. But as I kept reading, annoyance gave way to awe. I realized that my great-grandmother, and all the grandmothers before her, had had no way of judging range or oven temperatures because they were cooking on wood stoves.

Anna Mae Workinger Ackley

Five generations gather together in Stark County, Ohio, in 1966, including (l to r) Nora Smith Waller, Bernice Waller Ackley, Donovan Waller Ackley, and Donovan Waller Ackley, II, who is holding Heather Ann Ackley (the author).

As my husband and I heat our home with only a wood stove and fireplace, the problems associated with trying to cook on such an instrument impressed me immediately. The stove's temperature would vary, depending upon the amount, type, and condition of the wood used to fuel it. As the temperature varied, so of course would the cooking time. In between dashes to the woodpile to keep the stove fueled and the temperature as close to constant as possible, the cook would have to watch and test the food carefully, never knowing how long it would take to cook.

Trying to Follow Great-grandmother's Lead

As I kept reading recipes, which turned out to be mostly for desserts, I wondered when Great-grandma would include some nice vegetable recipes or main dishes. By the end of the cookbook, there had been only one page of vegetable recipes, all for pickling or canning, and no meat recipes, except the directions for curing a whole animal.

At first, I figured that Great-Grandma, known for her consumption of pecan sandies in her twilight years, just had an inordinate fondness for desserts. However, after several more reads, I feel more certain that casseroles and fancy side dishes were simply not on the menu at the Waller farm. With all the work that everyone had to do just to grow, preserve, and cook the food, time spent on intricate presentations of meat, fruit, and vegetables would not have been time wisely spent. Besides, as Grandpa remembers, "farm-fresh foods were wonderful," just as they were.

I was comforted to read Bernice's recipes for vinegar pie and canning, two kitchen experiments I'd first attempted in California. Actually, I'd never even heard of vinegar pie until after I'd moved to California. About three years ago, I had bought a cookbook of recipes from the Tennessee mountains. Vinegar pie sounded like one of the most authentically Appalachian of these recipes, so I was determined to try to make it, no matter how it tasted.

> Nora and her mother Nancy were two women in two kitchens on two farms separated only by a hill and a window.

My first attempt at vinegar pie was not a success. The cooking directions in the Tennessee cookbook, it turned out, were even less specific than those contained in Bernice's cookbook. Great-grandma Bernice had at least spelled out the need to mix all of the ingredients before boiling. My first vinegar pie came out with bits of egg yolk mixed into the filling, so that it resembled a scrambled egg cream pie. (I never said I was *good* in the kitchen, just that I enjoy it.)

My attempts at canning have gone better for me, especially as I gain more practice. It once took me two days to can six pints of peaches, but that was three seasons ago.

It has only been as I've researched Bernice Waller's cookbook and its origins, in an attempt to reconnect with my Appalachian Ohio roots, that I learned that after marrying, moving to Massillon, and having children, Bernice had gone back to high school and completed her diploma. Along with her cookbook, my father gave me an academic journal of hers, dated 1929-1930. I was surprised to find that, in contrast to her cookbook, the spelling and grammar in this journal were consistent and accurate.

In the 10 days I spent back home last fall, I tried to drink it all in: enough love, enough family, enough green hills to sustain me in my desert life in California. It was a bittersweet experience as I slowly recognized that I had always underestimated and misunderstood my great-grandmother. I am ashamed to confess that I had had no interest in her while she was alive, though I selfishly enjoyed the rare private time with her son, my grandfather, whenever he took me along on his daily visits to her. Because she had quietly listened and let others speak, I assumed she'd had nothing worth saying. What I have since found between the blue covers of that old handwritten cookbook hints at the woman I wish I'd taken the time to get to know. N&T

Heather Ann Ackley Bean is pastor of Peace Fellowship, a House Church of Anabaptists in Claremont, Calif., and professor of church history and biblical languages at Scholars Bible College in Moreno Valley, Calif. She holds a doctorate in the philosophy of religion and theology from Claremont Graduate University.

Recipes and Remedies from Bernice Waller Ackley's Cookbook

Dry Sugar Cure Meat.

3 oz. salt petre. 3 oz. brown sugar. 3 pt. salt to 80 lb meat, rub every 5 days for 3 rubings. Add 3 oz peper to last rubing.

Croup Remidy.

Make a tea by steeping a table spoon of ground allspice, strain and drink as hot as possiable. Keep coverd warm.

Suiet Pudding.

1 cup chopped Suiet, 1 cup Sugar
1 cup sweet milk, 1 cup raisens
1/2 teaspoon ginger, 1/2 teaspoon cineameon
1 teaspoon baking powder to each cup flour. Make stiff batter like cake, steam three hours.

Sugar Pie

One cup sugar, 2 table spoon flour, 1 teaspoon butter, 1 large cup full water
Cook on the stove untill thick
Flavor with nutmeg.

Chocklate Pie

1/2 pt sugar, 4 tablespoon flour, 1 table spoon butter, 3 tablespoon chocklate moisten.

Pork cake.

1 cup chopped fat pork, 1 cup boiling coffee, 1 cup currants, 2 cup raisens, 1/2 cup molasses, 1/2 cup brown sugar, 1 teaspoon soda, 1 teaspoon cinnamon, 1 teaspoon alespice, 1/2 teaspoon cloves, 5 cups of flower,

A piece of white paper on top and bottom to keep from burning.

Buns.

1/2 cake yeast, soked in cup of water, nearly cup mashed potatoes, nearly cup luke warm water, 1 teaspoon salt, 2 tablespoon sugar. Let raise. Then cup or nearly of lard. Quart or more flour, mix as for bread, and let raise.

Oatmeal Cookies.

This recipe makes a very large batch of cookies, but they will keep well for weeks. Mix together 4 cups of flour (into which you have sifted a teaspoon full of soda), and 3 cupfuls of oatmeal. Add 2 cupsful of powdered sugar and 3/4 of a cup of melted shortening with a teaspoonful of salt. Moisten the mass with enough cold water to make a very stiff dough. Roll as thin as possible, cut into round cakes and bake.

Vinegar Pie

Mix 1 cup each of vinegar, water, and sugar. add yolk of 1 egg, 3 tablespoon flour, about 2 level teaspoons cinnameon, Boil all together, then add lump butter and salt. White of egg on top.

Black Cake.

One cup sugar, 1 cup sour milk, 1-3 cup butter, 2 cups flour, 1 cup raisins, 1 teaspoon soda, 1 teaspoon cloves, 1/2 nutmeg.

Rice Pudding.

Take two cups of cold boiled rice, and put in nearly one quart of hot milk, take your clean washed right hand and mash it fine; add an even teaspoon of salt, three tablespoons of sugar, two beaten eggs, and nutmeg. Bake thirty minutes.

Banna Pie.

Slice bannas in crust. 1 cup sweet milk, 1/2 cup sugar, butter size of hickernut, 2 tablespoons flour.

Mince Pie.

3 qt. of meat. 5 qt. of Apples. 1 qt of molasses, 1 qt vinegar, 1 qt of cider, 2 qt raisins, 5 qt sugar, 2 tablespoons cinnamon, 2 tablespoons cloves, 2 tablespoons of nutmeg, 1 teaspoon pepper & salt. Boil all but meat.

Poor Man's Pudding.

2 cups flour, sifted with 2 teaspoons baking powder, 1 cup sugar, pinch salt, 1 teaspoon vanilla, 1 tablespoon melted butter, 1 cup sweet milk. Bake in a tin, cut in squares, and serve with following sauce. Mix 3 tablespoons flour, with 1 cup sugar, pinch salt, 2 tablespoons vinegar, small piece butter, stir into 3 cups boiling water. Cook 5 min. pour over pudding.

Beet Relish.

1 qt. chopped beets, 1 qt chopped cabbage, 1 cup sugar, horsradish, salt and pepper to taste, pour cold vinegar over and seal.

Quince Honey.

5 large quinces, 4 pt sugar, 2 pt. water. Let sugar and water desolve before puting in quinces.

Ground Green Tomatoe Catsup.

One half bu. green tomatoes, 1 doz. green peppers, 1 head cabbage. 2 lb. brown sugar, 2 table spoon cinnamon, 1 table spoon allspice, 1 table spoon cloves, 1 table spoon pepper, 1/2 cup mustard all ground, 1 pt grated horse-radish & vinegar enough to mix well. Cook all to-gether till heat through.

Ice Cream Candy.

3 cups white sugar, 1/4 teaspoon cream of tartar, 1/2 cup water. Boil without stiring until when tried in cold water it is brittle. Turn into buttered platter, butter the hands as soon as cool enough to handle and pull till white and glossy. Color and flavor when ready for pulling.

Vinegar Candy.

Two cups molasses, 2 tablespoons sugar, 2 tablespoons vinegar. Boil until it strings from spoon.

Weights and Measures.

Four teaspoonfuls of liquid equal to one tablespoon.
Four tablespoonsfuls of liquid equal to one-half gill, or one-quarter cup.
Ten eggs equal one pound.
Butter the size of an egg equal to two ounces.

Helpful Hints:

Salt and lemon will remove rust from white materials.

Scorched spots or bluing streaks can be removed by placing in hot sun for severel hours.

New tin ware rubed over with fresh lard and thourly heated in oven before being used will never rust.

In storing away white material such as bed or table linen wrape in dark blue paper to prevent it from turning yellow.

A page from the cookbook of Bernice Waller Ackley

Turnips, Rules, and Joan of Arc

by Patricia Davidson

Turnips trigger one of those knock-down, drag-out power struggles between a mother and a daughter.

Mother had supper on the table every evening at four o'clock. That was the time Daddy got home from work, and it was about the time we kids got home from school.

Most of the time, the school bus got there first. I'd drop my library books on the landing, hurry upstairs, change out of my school clothes, and go wash my hands and set the table. Then my sister, Angela, and I would sit on the swinging bridge and wait for Daddy, dangling our feet over the cool water below us. Often while we waited, I'd read: books like *Big Red, Treasure Island,* or *The Little Maid.* But when Daddy pulled up in his old green Chevy truck, all thoughts of dogs and pirates and Joan of Arc were carefully tucked within the yellowed pages and held there with an index card bookmark. Then Angela and I would argue over who got to carry Daddy's metal dinner bucket for him. Often I'd carry the dinner bucket, and he'd carry Angela. Sometimes Daddy would carry us both, one giggling under each arm.

Every day as we crossed the bridge, we went through the same ritual. "Guess what we're having for supper?" I'd say. Daddy always made a pretense of thinking hard. Then he'd sort of smile and inquire, "Beans and 'taters?"

I'd grin back and say, "Good guess, but that was yesterday. Today we're having 'taters and beans."

We'd all laugh and head for the house, but we didn't joke in front of Mother. She was a no-nonsense type, and criticizing the food or how it was prepared was strictly forbidden. We were expected to give thanks and be grateful to God for what He provided.

One evening, Mother cooked turnips for supper. The odor was terrible, and, nauseated, I gagged at the smell of them.

After everyone had washed up, we sat down and bowed our heads and said the blessing. Then we all waited while Daddy helped his plate. Once he finished, he passed the dishes to Mother who helped herself and then handed the serving plates to us children last of all. I took some brown beans and a slice of corn bread, but I didn't take any turnips.

Mother noticed and offered: "Patty, would you like some turnips?"

A polite response of "No, thank you," would have carried no penalty, but before I could think, five little impolite words slipped right out.

"No, I don't like turnips."

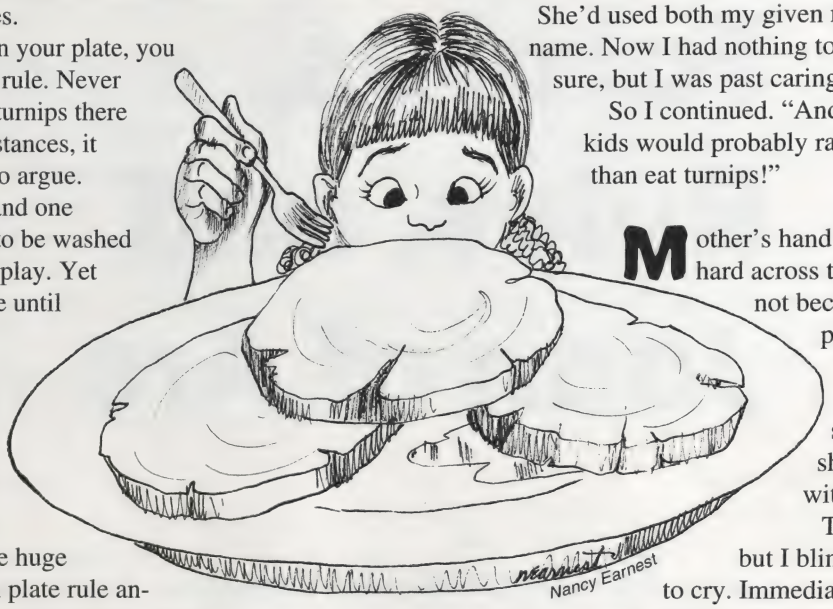
That got Mother started with yet another lecture about how we should be grateful for what was set before us. She plopped

We didn't joke in front of Mother. She was a no-nonsense type, and criticizing the food or how it was prepared was strictly forbidden.

three small turnip slices onto my plate, then spooned some of the broth onto the top of them. I stared, horrified, as the juice from the turnips ran over and soaked into the bottom of the corn bread

I dearly loved. Still, I managed to wash the soggy, ruined bread down with my milk. Then I ate my beans. All that remained were three big turnip slices.

If you put something on your plate, you had to eat it. That was the rule. Never mind that I didn't put the turnips there myself. Under the circumstances, it would have been useless to argue. Mother had lots of rules, and one stated that the dishes had to be washed before we could go out to play. Yet another kept us at the table until we cleaned our plates.



It was Roger's week to do dishes, and after everyone else had finished eating, he cleared up, then deserted me for the outdoors. Three huge turnip slices and the clean plate rule anchored me to that kitchen chair as securely as the ropes that had bound the Maid of Orleans to the stake.

Outside, I could hear C.J., Roger, and Angela playing Indian ball. Being the oldest, C.J. would take first turn at bat. Angela and Roger would scramble after the ball, and the one who retrieved it got a chance for a turn at bat. How I longed to join the game, but three gigantic turnip slices barred the way.

Three huge turnip slices and the clean plate rule anchored me to that kitchen chair as securely as the ropes that had bound the Maid of Orleans to the stake.

About an hour-and-a-half later, Mother entered the kitchen and sat down at the table across from me. She studied me with a rather pitying look, and it occurred to me that she was considering breaking her own rule and letting me go.

But I was proud and stubborn and didn't need anybody's pity. I stuck my tongue out at those three enormous turnip slices. Even if Mother had dismissed me, I would have sat there anyway. Rules, after all, were rules, and the martyr Joan of Arc didn't have a thing on me.

Finally, Mother sadly shook her head and said, "You know, there are children in this world who would love to have what is on your plate right now."

Impudently, I replied, "You know, I'd love for them to have it, too!"

That was bad enough, but once started, I couldn't shut up.

"They can have my three turnip slices and this whole bowl, for all I care. I know what. Why don't we just send a truckload? We'll grow 'em and box 'em up and ship 'em to those starving children."

Mother's face flushed with anger, but I ignored the warning signal.

"Better yet, why don't we just ship every turnip in the whole world to those starving children in Africa?"

"You better hush your mouth, Patricia Dianne."

She'd used both my given name and the dreaded middle name. Now I had nothing to lose. I'd get a whipping for sure, but I was past caring.

So I continued. "And you know what else? Those kids would probably rather starve and die happy than eat turnips!"

Mother's hand shot out and slapped me hard across the face. I hushed then, but not because it hurt, although it hurt plenty. I hushed because I was stunned, speechless. Mother had striped my legs with switches lots of times, but she had never, ever struck me with her hand before.

Tears welled up in my eyes, but I blinked them back and refused to cry. Immediately, Mother apologized over and over. But I wouldn't answer her pleas for forgiveness. Then she started crying and laid her head on her arms on the table. She told me to go on outside.

I got up but didn't go out. Instead, I crossed to the Frigidaire and got out the dark Karo syrup. I pretended those three hateful turnip slices were pancakes and doused them with the Karo.

That first bite tasted horrible, a warring mixture of sweetness and acidity. My stomach revolted. Bile raised up in my throat. Now I would have rather died on the spot than gagged or vomited, so I swallowed hard and willed it all to stay down.

It did. Since I'd proven to myself that I could do it, I quickly ate the rest of those insignificant little turnips. Then, in order not to be wasteful, I sopped up the turnip juices and the rest of the syrup with a piece of light bread and ate that too.

I washed my plate and fork, rinsed them, and placed them in the dish drainer. Then I wiped the table and my chair and let out the dishwater Roger had left. I rinsed out the sink and carefully folded the dish cloth, draping it across the spigot the way Mother liked.

That first bite tasted horrible, a warring mixture of sweetness and acidity. My stomach revolted. Bile raised up in my throat.

Having satisfied all the rules, I turned and, without a word, went outside. I didn't tell the others what had happened, but they must have sensed that it was something serious, for Roger gave me his turn at bat—and C.J. didn't even protest. N&T

A lifelong resident of Southwest Virginia, Patricia Davidson teaches mathematics at the George Wythe High School in Wytheville, Va. Her work has won first place at Chautauqua as well as received awards from the Virginia Highlands Festival and the Virginia Poetry Society. One of her poems, "Lonny Parker," will appear in an upcoming issue of The Sow's Ear Poetry Review.

News CASS

ETSU

Newsletter of the Center for Appalachian Studies and Services • East Tennessee State University

ARCHIVES OF APPALACHIA

CARROLL REECE MUSEUM

Spring-Summer 1998

INSIDE:

Exhibit features Tennessee crafts, p. 3

Kathleen Wilson exhibit highlighted, p. 5

Donations to Center for 1997 cited, pp. 6-11

The Center for Appalachian Studies and Services received a $5,000 donation from K-VA-T Foods, Inc. for the Encyclopedia of Appalachia. Dr. Jean Speer, director of the Center (fourth from left) and Dr. Paul Stanton, president of ETSU (fifth from left) accept the check from K-VA-T representatives (left to right) Steve Shaffer, Bob Sutherland, CEO Jack L. Smith, Tom Hembree, and Rick Miller.

ENCYCLOPEDIA MEETS $50,000 FUNDING MATCH

After providing some start-up funding for the **Encyclopedia of Appalachia** project, the Appalachian Regional Commission issued the Center a challenge to raise $50,000 in funding, identify sources for the remainder of funds needed for the project, and make significant progress on the work plan for the volume to become eligible to apply for an additional $50,000 grant from the Commission. With the help of Advisory Board members, East Tennessee State University, and the University of Tennessee Press, the encyclopedia's publisher, the Center put together a **$50,000** funding package and identified additional grant agencies and foundations for potential funding. The Center has now been approved for the additional $50,000 grant from the ARC.

The Center would like to thank everyone who helped us reach this milestone. We want to give special thanks to Advisory Board members Jane Stephenson, Dr. Roy Nicks, Lee Smith, Jean Ritchie, and Dr. Alice Manicur for personal gifts that totaled nearly $5000, and Nicks, Wilma Dykeman, Noah Adams, Al Smith, Ross Spears, Bill Kovach, Congressman Rick Boucher, Jane Stephenson, Dr. Juanita Kreps, and the University of Tennessee Press for helping us identify other potential sources of funding.

In recognition of Lieutenant Governor Nancy Hollister's membership on the board, the State

continued on page 2

ARCHIVES

CONSULTANT STUDIES AUDIO-VISUAL COLLECTIONS

Media specialist **Dr. Michael Taft** recently spent three days as a consultant in the Archives of Appalachia examining the preservation needs of the department's audio-visual collections. Taft studied much of the archives' extensive holdings of recordings in such formats as audio cassettes, reel-to-reel audio and video recordings, VHS and 3/4" videotape, and 16mm film. Currently, the archives holds some 7,000 recordings in one format or another.

"Dr. Taft has been looking for possible preservation problems and giving suggestions regarding the audio-visual holdings of the archives as well as helping document the value these holdings have for scholars," said **Norma Myers**, archives curator. "Since the composition of tape and film can change over time, it is important that we insure the preservation of the

continued on page 5

ARCHIVES REORGANIZES FOLLOWING TRANSITION

Following several months of self-study as part of the administrative reporting structure transition from the Sherrod Library to the Center (noted in the Winter 1997-98 *NewsCASS)*, the **Archives of Appalachia** has recently reorganized its operations.

Previously known as Archives and Special Collections with sub-divisions of Archives of Appalachia, University Archives, and Special Collections, the archives will now be known as the Archives of Appalachia. It consists of three units: Appalachian Manuscript Collections, University Archives, and Special Collections (the department's book collection).

NewsCASS, the newsletter of the Center for Appalachian Studies and Services (Archives of Appalachia, Reece Museum, and Regional Resources Institute) at East Tennessee State University, is published three times a year. Center and FORM members receive *NewsCASS* as part of the benefits of membership.

CENTER FOR APPALACHIAN STUDIES AND SERVICES

Dr. Jean Haskell Speer, Director

ARCHIVES OF APPALACHIA
Georgia Greer, Office Manager
Ned Irwin, University Archivist & Editor, *NewsCASS*
Norma Myers, Curator
Ed Speer, Archive Assistant
Marie Tedesco, Appalachian Archivist

REECE MUSEUM
Margaret S. Carr, Asst. Director/Registrar
Nancy Jane Earnest, Media Specialist
Lisa Erwin, Office Manager
Harold F. Stewart, Sr., Preparator
Blair H. White, Asst. Director/Curator

REGIONAL RESOURCES INSTITUTE
Nancy Fischman, Mng. Editor, *Now & Then*
Becky Grindstaff, Office Manager
Stevan Jackson, Director, Appalachian-Scottish & Irish Studies
Charles Moore, Coordinator
Jack Tottle, Director, Bluegrass Program
Jane Harris Woodside, Asst. Director & Editor, *Now & Then*

Staff positions and responsibilities have changed to reflect the overall restructuring of the department. For several years the archives operated with a public services archivist (responsible for reference service) and a technical services archivist (responsible for collection processing). Now there will be a University Archivist (**Ned Irwin**), responsible for both reference and processing of the university collections and an Appalachian Archivist (**Marie Tedesco**), responsible for reference and processing of the Appalachian collections. In addition, the positions of office manager (**Georgia Greer**) and archive assistant (**Ed Speer**) have increased responsibilities under the new plan. The title of department head (**Norma Myers**) has changed to that of Curator of the Archives of Appalachia.

"The changes are the result of an intense study over a period of several months undertaken by the archives staff of all aspects of the archives' operations. The new structure we feel will make the archives more efficient and effective in meeting the mission of the Center, the College of Arts and Sciences, and the university," said Norma Myers, archives curator. ◆

Encyclopedia, continued from page 1

of Ohio awarded the Center a $4000 grant, and, through the efforts of Lee Smith, K-VA-T Foods, Inc. gave the Center a $5000 donation (see photo). Dr. Paul Stanton, Jr., ETSU president, approved funding from the university that helped us finally reach the $50,000 goal. Through the efforts of John Hall, we secured the first $2500 corporate donation to buy copies of the **Encyclopedia** for schools and libraries in the region from Arch Coal Company. Former Senator Howard H. Baker, Jr. has assisted the Center in seeking foundation funding for the project, and Dr. Jesse White, federal co-chair of ARC, and the ARC staff have provided useful advice and steadfast support.

In other news, Dr. Tess Lloyd, a faculty member in the English department at ETSU, is spending the spring semester as a research associate in the Center working on the **Encyclopedia.** With her help, the co-editors, Dr. Jean Speer and Rudy Abramson, and the rest of the Center staff have been hammering out details of the topics/entries outline, the work flow plan, and other issues in managing such a large project. The encyclopedia's editorial board met in March prior to the Appalachian Studies Association meeting to work on the entry outline, identification of section editors, and resolution of some of the knotty content and organizational questions.

Current work on the **Encyclopedia** centers on preparing a grant proposal for the National Endowment for the Humanities, working with section editors to refine the entry submission process, and beginning the task of assigning and editing entries. The Center still invites letters of interest from potential contributors identifying their topics of expertise and gladly will accept financial gifts in support of the project and/or information about funding sources. ◆

CENTER COORDINATES APPALACHIAN SESSIONS FOR SEMINARY PROGRAM

The Center will coordinate an Appalachian Studies program sponsored by the **Catholic Diocese of Knoxville** for seminarians early in the summer. This is the third time the diocese has asked the Center to help prepare seminary students for ministering in the region.

Students are from the region and plan on returning here after graduation. **Father Mike Creson** represents the diocese with cooperation from the ETSU Catholic Center. Noted educators and experts from the region will deliver a series of lectures on topics from an Appalachian viewpoint about film, media, literature, politics, housing, family violence, music, activism, welfare, religion, and more. Field trips are planned to include an active deep-coal mine, the Carter Family Fold, a Primitive Baptist Universalist service, an evening service at Grace Temple, mass at an Hispanic service, and several work days. ◆

REECE MUSEUM

EXHIBIT FEATURES BEST OF TENNESSEE CRAFTS

The Reece Museum will be one of six Tennessee and Georgia venues for the *Tennessee Association of Craft Artists* (TACA) *1998 Biennial Exhibit* June 6 - July 19. The purpose of the competition/exhibition is to encourage and promote a high standard of excellence and design among Tennessee craft artists and to provide public visibility and recognition for the quality and diversity of crafts found in the state. Assembled in an extraordinary mixture of colors, shapes, and textures will be works in clay, fiber, glass, wood, metals, leather, handmade paper, mixed media, photography, and printmaking. The juror of the competition, **Lloyd Herman**, founding director of the Renwick Gallery of the Smithsonian Institution, now works independently as a curator, juror, and lecturer in the field of American crafts. The TACA biennial exhibit is a favorite with museum patrons because of the excellent quality and range of items created by some of Tennessee's most gifted artisans. ◆

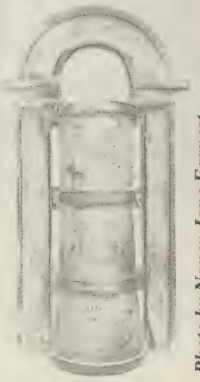


Photo by Nancy Jane Earnest

"WillegUrn II," 1994, by Lynn Whitehead.

REECE MUSEUM

HERITAGE SERIES WORKSHOPS CONTINUE

Preserving Our Appalachian Heritage workshops are a continuing series of educational opportunities covering topics of family, local, and regional interest presented by professionals in their fields. Sponsored by the Reece Museum, Friends of the Reece Museum, and the Center for Appalachian Studies and Services, the series was initiated in September 1997 when **Rudy Abramson**, former executive director of Protect Historic America and Washington correspondent for the *Los Angeles Times*, spoke in conjunction with the Reece's exhibit based on the publication of his book, *Hallowed Ground: Preserving America's Heritage*.

The series continues to explore aspects of Appalachian culture and life and its preservation in the shadow of the 21st century. Workshops scheduled for spring and summer include: **"Collecting and Caring for Regional Art,"** May 19; **"Collecting and Caring for Regional Crafts,"** June 9; **"Preserving Appalachia's Musical Heritage,"** July 14; and **"Preserving and Pickling: Foodways in Appalachia,"** August 11. The workshops are held 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. in the museum and are free and open to the public. Workshop topics have been scheduled to enhance concurrent exhibits at the Reece. ◆

Now & Then

NEW THEMES PLANNED

Now & Then's winter 1998 issue will be devoted to **Transportation in Appalachia.** It's your chance to talk about trains, planes, and automobiles in the region. The deadline for the Transportation issue is **July 1, 1998.**

The theme for the spring 1998 issue is **Appalachian Architecture.** As always, we welcome submissions on any and all types of architecture, from barns to skyscrapers. And of course, we'd be interested in receiving stories on architects themselves and on subjects such as landscape architecture. The deadline for Appalachian architecture is **November 1, 1998.**

Articles and fiction should not exceed 2,500 words; book reviews should be no more than 750 words. If a self-addressed, stamped envelope with sufficient postage is enclosed, work not selected will be returned. Send submissions and written queries to *Now & Then*, ETSU, Box 70556, Johnson City TN 37614-0556; call 423-439-5348; or e-mail woodsidj@etsu.edu. You may obtain a copy of *Now & Then*'s guidelines for writers, reviewers, or illustrators (specify which you would like) by writing to the Center; guidelines are also available on the web at http://cass.etsu.edu/n&t/guidelin.htm. ◆

On July 24-September 6, 1998, the Reece Museum, in conjunction with *Now and Then* magazine's "Food in Appalachia" issue, will exhibit **"Food For The Senses: An Appalachian Cultural Sampler."** The exhibit features historical items having to do with food and food preparation. The Archives of Appalachia will contribute a display of food product labels from the IPC Dennison Company in Rogersville, Tenn.

If you have ever wondered what a pioneer kitchen contained, or what the latest labor-saving devices of 1879 were, you will get a pretty good idea as you view the Reece's various food grinding items, molds for butter, a skillet with legs and a waffle iron (to be used in a fireplace), a dough tray and stove-top bread baker, mortar and pestle, butter churn, a copper kettle and wooden paddle used for making apple butter over an open fire, and a flour sack from Johnson City's own Model Mill, among others.

Appalachia's rich cultural history includes foodways brought to the area from other parts of the country as well as overseas. This exhibit, as well as the *Preserving our Appalachian Heritage* workshop on **"Preserving and Pickling: Foodways in Appalachia,"** (August 11) and *Now and Then*'s "Food in Appalachia" issue will help light the aromatic path from great-great-grandmother's kitchen to our own.

During the Food Exhibit, ETSU will be promoting the publication of its own cookbook, ***Home and Away: the Cooking of East Tennessee State University***, with a reception at the Reece on Tuesday, August 25, 1998, from 4-6 p.m. Stop by and enjoy a "taste of ETSU." ◆

REECE MUSEUM

FOOD IS THE FOCUS OF SUMMER EXHIBIT

ARCHIVES

SELECTED RECENT ACQUISITIONS

EARL ANDERSON COLLECTION
1.75 ft.
Consists of correspondence, notes, maps, and genealogies related to various East Tennessee families and churches. Donated by Thomas Earl Anderson, Piney Flats, Tenn.

ROY W. CARDEN COLLECTION
1997 and undated. .1 ft. Addition.
Consists of correspondence and photocopies of printed material related to the Carden family and Georgia Gov. Nathaniel E. Harris. Donated by Roy W. Carden, Poulan, Ga.

EDWARD D. CROSS COLLECTION
1901-93. 8 ft.
Consists of 85 scrapbooks of clippings documenting various international, national, regional, and local events and personalities. Donated by Edward D. Cross, Piney Flats, Tenn.

ALTA ELIZABETH PARDUE KEIRN PAPERS
1914-48 and undated. .2 ft.
Consists of correspondence, a biographical sketch, photographs and a photograph album documenting the career of educator Keirn, believed to be the first student enrolled at East Tennessee State Normal School (now ETSU) in 1911. Donated by Mary Frances Keirn Vanzant, Johnson City, Tenn.

NATIONAL STORYTELLING FESTIVAL ORAL HISTORY COLLECTION
1997. .1 ft.
Consists of question lists, interview tape list, release forms, and photographs documenting interviews with participants in the 25th annual festival held in Jonesborough, Tenn. Donated by Dr. Jean H. Speer, CASS, ETSU.

TRI-CITIES ARTS COUNCIL RECORDS
1966-80. 2.5 ft.
Consists of correspondence, incorporation charter and bylaws, minutes, news releases, newsletters, memoranda, membership lists, financial records, grant proposals, and other printed ephemera documenting the council's activities, including the Summerfest '79 Road Show and Summerfest '80. Donated by Dr. James Reese, Dept. of English, ETSU.

FRED WASKIEWICZ COLLECTION
1903-68. .75 ft.
Consists of surveys, deeds, contracts, correspondence, reports, title abstracts, and miscellaneous records related to the operations of the Pittsburgh Lumber Company, Laurel Fork Railway Company, Buckeye Lumber Company, Braemar Power Company in Carter County, Tenn. Donated by Fred Waskiewicz, Austin, Tex.

The archives thanks the following for other donations of materials or financial contributions to the department recently: B. J. Bryson; Thomas G. Burton; Elizabeth Cushman, Charles Gunter, Jr.; David and Rachel Hsiung; Beverly Ingersoll; Instructional Materials Center, ETSU; John L. Kiener; Irwin Marcus; Carolyn Moore; James. H. Quillen; Sherrod Library, ETSU; Mary A. Toborg; and University Press. ◆

CENTER ASSOCIATE'S EXHIBIT FEATURED AT WOODROW WILSON HOME

Ellen Axson Wilson, wife of America's twenty-eighth president Woodrow Wilson, saw firsthand the expert craftsmanship of mountain women during her travels to the southern mountains. She understood their struggles as artists and wage earners. By decorating the White House with handcrafted fabrics from the region, she focused national attention on the lives, financial needs, and talents of mountain women.

The exhibition, "**Homespun for the President's House**--Ellen Axson Wilson and the Decoration of the Blue Mountain Room," provides an opportunity to look into the most famous house in the country and view striking examples of early twentieth-century crafts and hand-weaving by two gifted Appalachian women, **Allie Josephine Mast** of North Carolina and **Elmeda McHargue Walker** of Tennessee. The exhibition opened October 23, 1997 and is on display through April 20, 1998 at the Woodrow Wilson House Museum in Washington, D. C.

On hand for the exhibition opening were, from left to right: Dr. Alan Jabbour, director of the American Folklife Center in Washington, D. C.; Dr. Jean Haskell Speer, Center director; Scott Prouty, who provided music; and guest curator and Center research associate Kathleen Curtis Wilson.

First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton is honorary patron for the exhibit. The Center for Appalachian Studies and Services at ETSU provided partial sponsorship for the exhibit. Center research associate **Kathleen Curtis Wilson** is guest curator for the exhibition.

Representing honorary patron Hillary Rodham Clinton at the opening of the "Homespun for the President's House" exhibition were Kaki Hockersmith (second from left), personal designer for the Clinton White House, and Betty Monkman (fourth from left), curator of the White House. They are pictured here with guest curator and Center research associate Kathleen Curtis Wilson and curator of the Woodrow Wilson House Museum, Frank Aucella. (Photographs by Beverly Resnick)

Wilson recently published a study of Josephine Mast, one of the weavers featured in the exhibit, *May We All Remember Well,* a journal of history and cultures of western North Carolina. She currently is working on a study of the Southern Industrial Education Association, an organization that promoted settlement school education in Appalachia and which helped Ellen Wilson purchase textiles and crafts used in the Blue Mountain Room. As a result of her research and development of the exhibition, Kathleen Wilson has been asked to be part of a panel on cultural and design interests of First Ladies at the Gerald Ford Library and to prepare an exhibition on Appalachian textiles for the American Textile History Museum in Lowell, Massachusetts.

The **Woodrow Wilson House Museum** is a National Trust Historic Site, located at 2340 S Street NW in Washington. Curator is Frank Aucella. For information about the exhibit, contact the museum at 202-387-4062. ◆

Consultant, continued from page 1

recordings for the future. Dr. Taft's visit will help us immensely in this cause."

The visit was made possible by assistance from **SOLINET** (Southeastern Library Network); **Dr. Don Johnson**, dean of the College of Arts and Sciences; **Dr. Michael Woodruff**, associate vice president for research; and funding support from the Center.

Taft is media and image archivist at the Southern Historical Collection of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. The report of his findings following the consultation is due later this spring. ◆

Museum Event Postponed

The Reece Museum's fund-raising event, **"Raise the Window,"** scheduled for Friday, March 13 has been postponed because of unforeseen circumstances, including the "Snowstorm of '98" and the accompanying inconveniences experienced by all. The new date will be announced in future publications. ◆

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ENCYCLOPEDIA CO-EDITOR RESEARCHING NEW BOOK

Rudy Abramson, co-editor of the **Encyclopedia of Appalachia,** was chosen by the Pew Charitable Trusts to write a book in support of their project on the future of Social Security. The project, "Americans Discuss Social Security," will provide public discussion forums and publish information that helps Americans and public policy makers think about the future of this significant social program.

Abramson's book, *The Human Face of Social Security,* will be based on his interviews with Social Security recipients from all over the country. His most recent book was *Hallowed Ground: Preserving America's Heritage.* ◆

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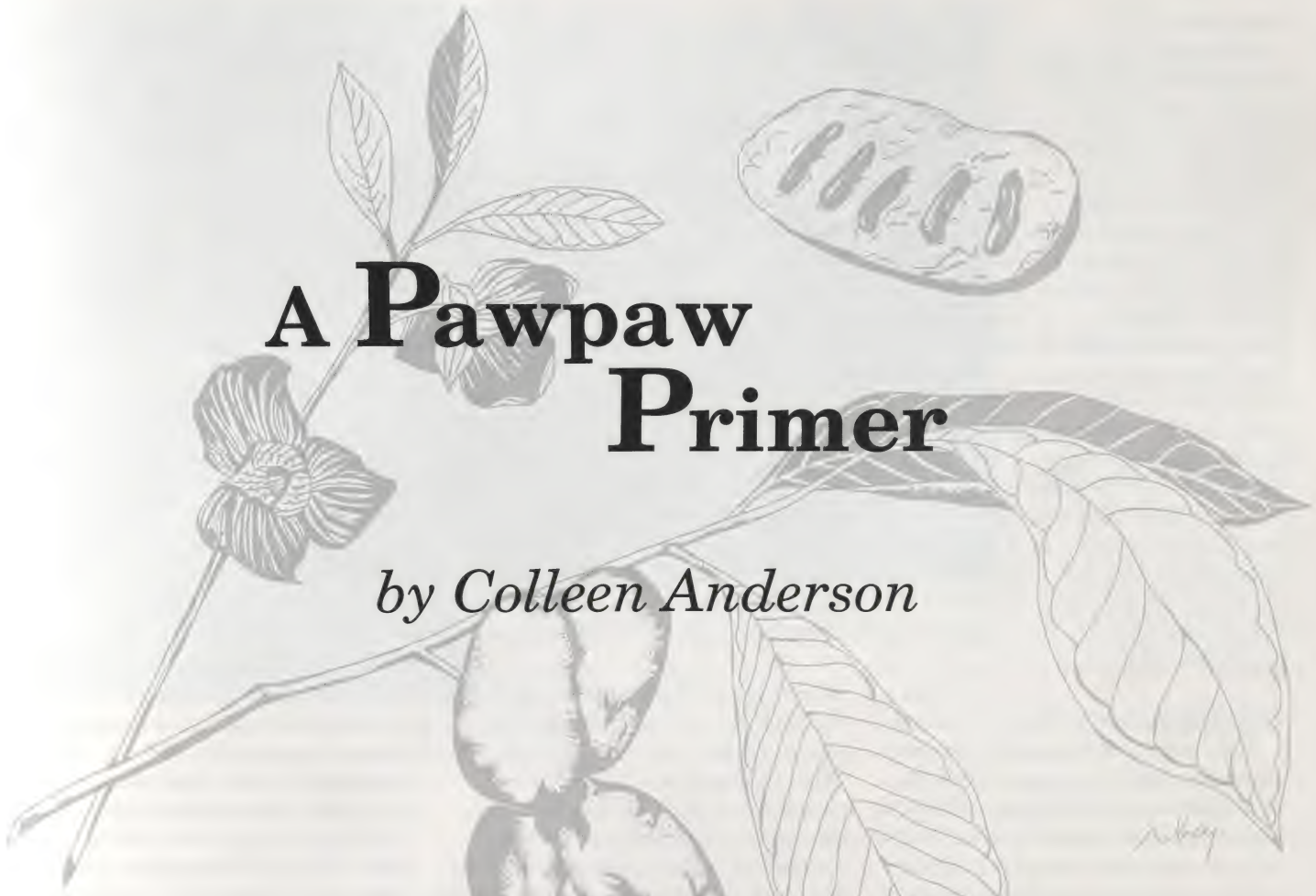


A Pawpaw Primer

by Colleen Anderson

More people than you'd ever dream are on a mission to get the pawpaw the respect they think it deserves.

It's early autumn, a warm afternoon. Leaves are beginning to fall on my favorite hiking path: the old carriage trail that begins near the Kanawha River in Charleston, W.Va., makes a few switchbacks on its way up the mountain, and ends at the sandstone mansion Governor William MacCorkle built for himself in 1905. I'm walking hard, working up a good sweat, enjoying the end-of-summer light through the thinning leaves.

Then I smell it for the first time this year — the sweet, fruity aroma that says, "It's fall": the smell of ripe pawpaws.

I smelled pawpaws in the fall woods for years before I knew what they were. You probably have, too. Wafting on a warm breeze, the sweetness is almost audible — a lilting music with an overtone of melancholy, a hint of the exotic, a suggestion of gypsy. All that from a pale green, hard-to-see-for-the-foliage, squishy, kidney-shaped fruit that often turns blotchy and black as it ripens.

Pawpaws Through the Ages

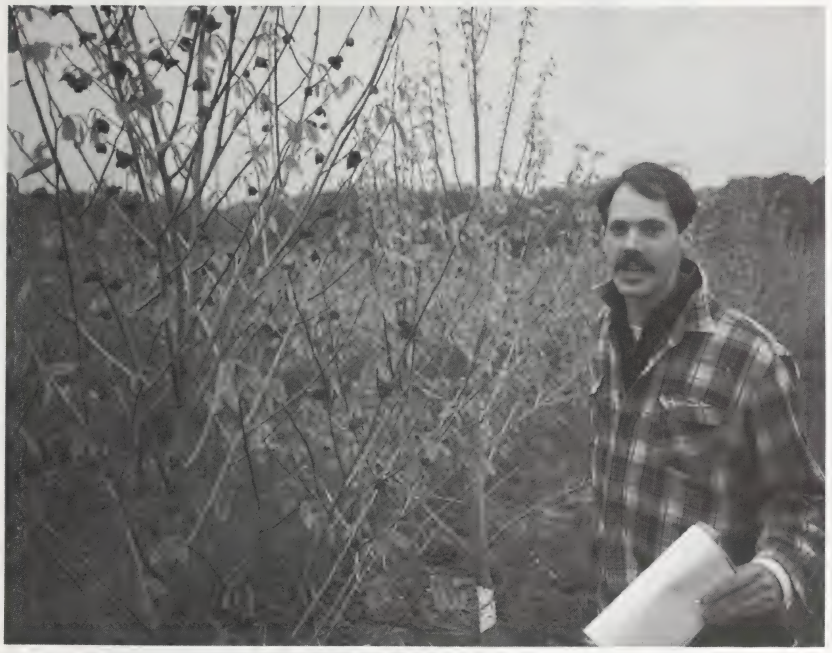
The pawpaw, *Asimina triloba,* is North America's largest native edible fruit. Its range extends as far north as southern Ontario, as far south as northern Florida, and as far west as eastern Nebraska. The Appalachian region — including the entire states of Kentucky, North Carolina, Ohio, Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia — is the heart of pawpaw territory. *Asimina* is the only temperate genus in the otherwise tropical and subtropical family, Annonaceae. All eight members of the genus grow in North America, but the pawpaw is the northernmost and, by far, the most widespread.

Nobody knows how long pawpaws have been growing in North America or how they got here in the first place, but fossil records indicate that they predate *Homo sapiens* by tens of thousands of years. However, it is probable that humans were responsible for dispersing the tree throughout its present range. Native Americans were the first on the continent to prize the nutritious fruit. In 1541, Spanish explorer Hernando DeSoto noted the tree being cultivated by Native Americans and related seeing baskets being woven from strips of pawpaw bark. Nearly 200 years later, explorer John Lawson reported in his 1709 book, *A New Voyage to Carolina,* that pawpaws were "as sweet, as anything can be. They make rare Puddings of this Fruit." Pawpaws surface again in a September 18, 1806 journal entry of the Lewis and Clark expedition. Although the party had run out of provisions, they were "perfectly contented" with subsisting on nothing but pawpaws and a single biscuit per man.

A little bit of pawpaw goes a long way.

Around 1827, naturalist and painter

John James Audubon chose a pawpaw tree as the background for his painting of a yellow-billed cuckoo. In a somewhat more dubious claim to fame, pawpaw bushes served as the backdrop for the 1882 triple murder of Randolph McCoy's sons during the Hatfield-McCoy feud along the West Virginia-Kentucky border. In the 1950s, singer Burl Ives popularized the traditional song, "Way Down Yonder in the Pawpaw Patch." And about a dozen towns in the United States, including one in my own state of West Virginia, bear the name of the tree.



Colleen Anderson

R. Neal Peterson works in the Western Maryland Experiment Station pawpaw orchard in Keddysville, Md. The pawpaw trees are in bloom.

The Pawpaw's Glory Days

Early in the 20th century, pawpaws enjoyed a surge of popularity. Orchards were established in Michigan and West Virginia by 1910, and in 1916, the *Journal of Heredity* sponsored a national contest to find the best fruits. The journal pointed out that the fruit has several drawbacks: a thin skin and a tendency to bruise easily, characteristics which contribute to its perishability; low yields per tree; the inconsistent flavor of wild pawpaws; and the plant's large and plentiful seeds, usually as many as 10 or 12 per fruit. The contest resulted in the identification of seven new superior clones and 14 already existing varieties. More were added during the next 30 years.

But interest in the pawpaw was eclipsed by the public's taste for another fruit that became widely available around the turn of the century: the banana. The banana was everything the pawpaw wasn't — seedless, tough-skinned, easy to peel, able to travel well and ripen slowly. The mass market spoke, and the pawpaw was relegated to the background.

That brings us to the topic of taste. What do pawpaws taste like? In West Virginia, I often hear the fruit called the "West Virginia banana." In Michigan, it's the "Michigan banana," and the lucky folks in Indiana, of course, get to rhyme: There, the pawpaw is the "Indiana banana." In fact, pawpaws taste only a bit like bananas. The taste has also been compared to peaches, mangoes, papayas, and vanilla custard. None of these is even close. A pawpaw is a pawpaw is a pawpaw.

And what a taste it is: dense, sweet, distinctly tropical, sometimes floral, sometimes slightly astringent, and with an aftertaste that can, to certain palates, be unpleasant. The creamy yellow flesh is the texture of custard. Reactions to the taste tend to be immediate and strong. You either love it or hate it. Once initiated, hardly anyone is without an opinion about a pawpaw.

In the name of science, I have eaten pawpaw bread, pawpaw ice cream, pawpaw chutney, pawpaw sorbet, pawpaw zabaglione (a rich dessert cream), and more ripe pawpaws than I care to count.

Breeding a Better Pawpaw

So far, the pawpaw's early drawbacks have prevented its acceptance as a commercial fruit, but around the country, a number of scientists (and more than a few devoted amateurs) are working on breeding a better pawpaw. One of those scientists, geneticist R. Neal Peterson, has championed the pawpaw since the early 1970s. A native of St. Albans, W.Va., he was a student at West Virginia University in Morgantown, W.Va., when he first tasted the fruit. His natural curiosity and love of plants led him, at first tentatively and then passionately, into an avocation that would eventually give rise to comparisons with Johnny Appleseed. Among the dozens of researchers now working on various potential uses for pawpaw — as food, ornamental tree, cosmetic base, organic pesticide, and anticarcinogen — he is acknowledged as one of the earliest, most well-informed of contemporary pawpaw researchers. And he has certainly been one of the most dedicated: While a farm economist at the U.S. Department of Agriculture in Washington, D.C., he did all of his pawpaw research at his own expense and on his own time. We who know him well sometimes call him "Mahatma Pawpaw."

It's been my good luck to have known Neal Peterson since before he discovered his avocation. I have watched his interest lead him to long-abandoned orchards in search of superior fruit; watched him learn, mostly by trial and error, the delicate arts of hand-pollinating and grafting; seen him eat the first fruit from a six-year-old, 700-tree orchard; watched him clean and sterilize seeds from hundreds of pounds of overripe fruit; and heard him cry when an entire year's harvest of painstakingly hand-crossed fruit was accidentally discarded by an assistant cleaning out a refrigerator.

In the name of science, and to please

Ray Jones, courtesy of The PawPaw Foundation

Pawpaw trees are recognizable by their pyramidal shape, foot-long glossy, veined, drooping leaves, and their clusters of peach- to mango-sized kidney-shaped fruit.

my old friend, I have eaten pawpaw bread, pawpaw ice cream, pawpaw chutney, pawpaw sorbet, pawpaw zabaglione (a rich dessert cream), and more ripe pawpaws than I care to count. Once, he talked me into driving a cooler full of pawpaws to a natural foods exhibition in Chicago, where we spooned out the delicacy to eager tasters. On the way back, we stopped at an experimental farm to load a rented truck with 300 small pawpaw trees on their way to another research facility.

In 1994, I attended the first international conference on pawpaws held at the University of Maryland's Research and Education Center in Keddysville, Md.; Peterson organized the conference. By then, the fruit had attracted admirers who traveled from as far away as Russia and China. By default, I have ended up as secretary of the nonprofit organization Peterson started, The PawPaw Foundation, and I serve as the co-editor of its semiannual newsletter. I never intended to learn this much about *any* plant, but I'm glad it happened. Peterson's enthusiasm, sense of humor, and gentle-but-persistent teaching have opened a door for me, not only to pawpaws but to growing things in general.

The Life Cycle of a Pawpaw

The way pawpaws grow, like so much else about this plant, is odd. In the wild, they tend to be found in moist, shady, well-drained places, often beside rivers or creeks. Germinating seedlings cannot tolerate full sun. Pawpaws under these conditions tend to develop into spindly understory trees with few widespread branches, and they generally bear little or no fruit. Paradoxically, pawpaw trees in the open — if you can protect them from the sun for the first year of their lives or transplant them, a tricky business — grow in a handsome pyramidal shape, from 15 to 30 feet tall, and bear much more fruit. The trees are easily recognizable by the foot-long oval leaves, glossy-green and distinctly veined, that droop from the branches. In fall, they turn a buttery golden color.

Pawpaw fans, even those with official titles and strings of college degrees, are invariably quirky, opinionated, passionate, and subject to spontaneous outbursts of glee.

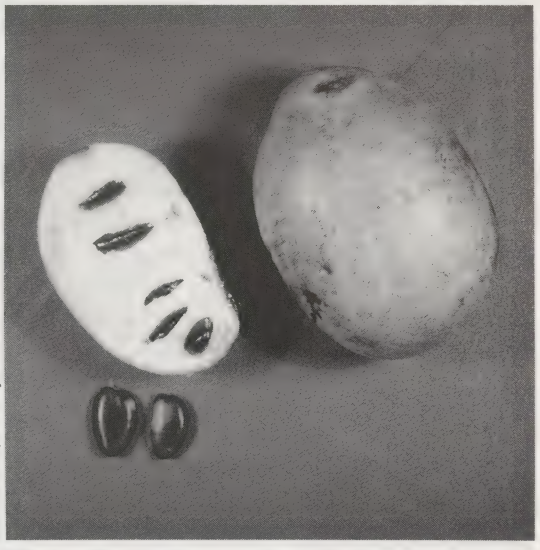
The trees blossom in spring, shortly after dogwoods bloom — small, bell-like flowers that turn from pale green to a rich brown or dark purple color. The flowers have three outer petals and three smaller, fleshy inner petals. The odor of the mature blossom is repugnant to humans — a musky, rotting-meat smell — but apparently the scent is attractive to flies and beetles, the tree's pollinators. And because the trees are not usually self-compatible, they require another nearby, genetically different pawpaw tree — or a person willing to hand-pollinate.

Pawpaws may have drawbacks, but they have one quality any gardener will appreciate: a chemical compound in the pawpaw makes it resistant to nearly all garden pests. Of these, one of the few is worth tolerating for its beauty: the zebra swallowtail butterfly, whose larvae eat only pawpaw leaves.

The fruit ripens in early fall, usually between late August and early October. Fruits grow singly or in clusters — sometimes as many as nine on a single stem, or peduncle — close to the branch. They vary from peach-sized to mango-sized and tend to be oval or kidney-shaped. As they ripen, pawpaws may turn yellowish, and dark brown or black spots may appear. These blotches do not affect the flavor. The fruit is ready to eat when fragrant, slightly soft to the touch, and easy to separate from the peduncle with a gentle tug.

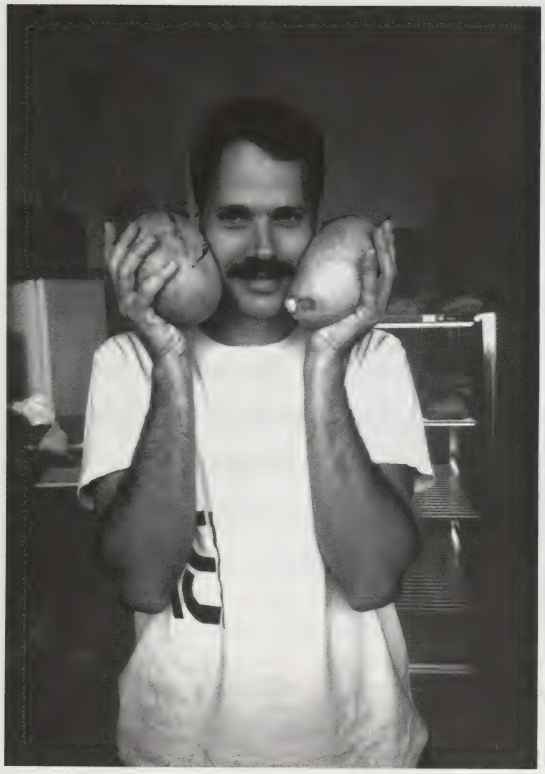
Using Pawpaws

So, what do you do with a ripe pawpaw? Most pawpaw lovers think it's best to eat the fruit where you find it. (If it has already fallen from the tree, you may have to brush away a few ants.) Finding and eating the first pawpaw of the season is an annual ritual. Cut or break the fruit in half and scoop out the pulp with a spoon, if you just happen to have brought one along. I like them even better with a squeeze of fresh lime juice, a tangy



R.L. Geneve, courtesy of The PawPaw Foundation

The author recommends eating pawpaws as you find them, scooping out the pulp with a spoon but avoiding the many large seeds.



D.R. Layne

Odd behavior, while not a prerequisite for scientists delving into the secret life of pawpaws, seems to spring up spontaneously and uncontrollably among pawpaw fans, as Neal Peterson demonstrates.

complement to the heavy sweetness of the fruit.

A little bit of pawpaw goes a long way. Eating a lot of pawpaws at once, I can report from unhappy personal experience, will cause diarrhea. Still, it's easy to see why Native Americans valued the fruit so highly: It is exceptionally rich in calories, protein, minerals, and essential amino acids.

Fully ripe pawpaws don't keep well. Expect them to last only a couple of days at room temperature or up to a week in the refrigerator. You can freeze the pureed pulp (with skin and seeds removed), and some people freeze the whole fruit. When cooking with pawpaws, you generally get good results by substituting them for bananas in breads, cakes, custards, puddings, and muffins. There are also a number of published pawpaw recipes. The most comprehensive collection, *Cooking with Pawpaws*, is free from the Pawpaw Research Program at Kentucky State University in Frankfort, Ky. The program offers about a dozen other publications about pawpaws, including some that go into detail about current pawpaw research, cultivation methods, and techniques for evaluating fruit.

The way pawpaws grow, like so much else about this plant, is odd.

Pawpaw People

Not the least of the pawpaw's blessings, for me, is the people it attracts. Pawpaw fans, even those with official titles and strings of college degrees, are invariably quirky, opinionated, passionate, and subject to spontaneous outbursts of glee. Maybe it's the fruit's eminently rhyme-able name (which probably arose from a confusion with the papaya). Maybe it's the pawpaw's underdog status in the commercial fruit-growing world—pawpaw proponents, even the most devoted, cannot really take themselves too seriously.

Whatever the reason, I've noticed that conversations about pawpaws have a tendency to end in wordplay and laughter. Ray Jones, a California grower and avid fan, once published a list called "Pawpaw Facts." Topping the list was the observation that "pawpaw" spelled backwards is "wapwap." For pawpaw lovers, serious science and unbridled silliness are not mutually exclusive.

But make no mistake, there is serious science going on. At the National Clonal Germplasm Repository in Corvallis, Ore., and at 15 universities throughout the pawpaw's native range, researchers are conducting regional variety trials, long-term cooperative experiments to evaluate 28 pawpaw varieties and clones. Under the leadership of Desmond Layne, who has since moved on to Clemson University in Clemson, S.C., Kentucky State University was named the primary repository for the preservation of *Asimina* germplasm, or the plant's genetic material which can be preserved and propagated. The university has also received grants for research on tissue culture, the most efficient means of preserving and propagating plant clones, and for the analysis of isozymes, the enzymes which permit the identification of plant tissue by variety. At Purdue University in West Lafayette, Ind., Jerry McLaughlin is conducting research on chemical compounds in pawpaws which show great promise as a treatment for certain types of cancer.

Perhaps, as Neal Peterson occasionally and shyly suggests, pawpaws will end up saving the world. Why not? In the meantime, they will continue to quietly blossom and bear, sweetening each fall with the incomparable aroma that signals summer's end. N&T

Colleen Anderson writes short stories, poems, songs, and articles. Her story "Windfall" was included in Best American Short Stories *1995 List of 100 Distinguished Stories, and her nonfiction appears regularly in* West Virginia Quarterly *and other periodicals. She owns Mother Wit, a creative studio in Charleston, W.Va.*

For more information on pawpaws, check out the Pawpaw Fact Sheet on the World Wide Web at http://www.hort.purdue.edu/newcrop/Crops/CropFactSheets/pawpaw.html. For a list of publications, nurseries, and seed sources, write to Kentucky State University, Pawpaw Research, 147 Atwood Research Facility, Frankfort KY 40601-2355. The PawPaw Foundation can be reached at the same address c/o Snake Jones, or e-mail sjones@gwmail.kysu.edu.

Drawings by Nancy Balow.

A Few Favorite Recipes

Pawpaw Zabaglione

6 egg yolks
1/4 cup sugar
1/4 cup passion fruit liqueur
1 cup pureed pawpaw pulp
1 cup whipping cream

Over a simmering double boiler, combine egg yolks and sugar. Meanwhile, heat the liqueur until warm (too much heat will cause it to ignite). Add the warmed liqueur to the egg yolk and sugar mixture. Continue to cook stirring constantly, until thickened. Allow to cool, and fold in the pawpaw puree. Whip cream into stiff peaks and fold it into the pawpaw and egg

yolk mixture. Serve chilled. (Raspberries and curls of semisweet chocolate make an attractive garnish.)

—Chef Michael Luksa, Yellow Brick Bank Restaurant, Shepherdstown, W.Va.

Pawpaw-Peach Relish

1 ripe pawpaw
2 ripe peaches
2 tablespoons blackberry liqueur
1 tablespoon lime juice

For this recipe, use a pawpaw that is not overripe. Dice the pawpaw and peaches, discarding seeds and pits. Mix with the liqueur and lime juice. This sweet relish makes a nice complement to turkey, ham, or lamb.

—Colleen Anderson

Pawpaw Pie or Parfait

1/2 cup brown sugar
1 envelope unflavored gelatin
1/2 teaspoon salt
2/3 cup milk
3 eggs, separated
1 cup strained pawpaw pulp
1/4 cup sugar

In a saucepan, mix together brown sugar, gelatin, and salt. Stir in milk and slightly beaten egg yolks. Heat and stir until mixture comes to a boil. Remove from fire, and stir in pawpaw pulp. Chill until it mounds slightly when spooned (20 to 30 minutes in refrigerator). Shortly before the mixture is sufficiently set, beat egg whites until they form soft peaks; then gradually add sugar, beating until stiff peaks form. Fold the partially set pawpaw mixture thoroughly into egg whites. Pour into a 9-inch graham cracker crust or into parfait glasses and chill until firm. "Then lock the door to keep the neighbors out."

—Euell Gibbons, who credits *Mountain Measures,* a recipe collection compiled by the Junior League of Charleston, W.Va.

Favorite Organ

My gallbladder, liver, appendix are strangers. They're down there somewhere. We've had no contact, though I've heard they're on my side.

But my stomach, ah, my stomach —we're closest of kin.

Ours is a private commune. Over fifty years of daily flux. It tells me what it wants. I tell it what I've got. We compromise. How well it digests my false notions. Stimulates with coffee when what I need is sleep. Weaves comfort into a ragged day with chips and onion dip. Orders chocolate when my lover's away. Worry rubs it raw; fear binds it. Overindulgence and it catches me up in its churning. It prowls a dark and rainy stage, delegates or discards with authority, keeps a running commentary on my life.

It's Rubenesque. An ungirdled declaration of goodness, of God's blessings. When I deny it, it turns sour and surly.

But after I've fasted, after my soul's been shriven, we're one again as we open together our heathen mouths and shout, "Fiesta!"

—Nell Maiden

Nell Maiden has taught English at Virginia Intermont College, Bristol, Va; King College, Bristol, Tenn.; and East Tennessee State University, Johnson City, Tenn. Her collection of poems, Reflections in a Clockshop, *was published by The Sow's Ear Press in 1996. Maiden has served as associate editor of* The Sow's Ear *and has had poems published in many journals.*

The Three Sisters

by Jane Mt.Pleasant

A Native American agronomist offers an appreciation of the way her ancestors farmed without resorting to fertilizers, pesticides, or plows.

It is the agriculture of the Haudenosaunee, the People of the Longhouse, that has captured my heart and my admiration.

My own father was Tuscarora, one of the Six Nations of the Haudenosaunee — also known as the Iroquois — Confederacy. I grew up in Onondaga County, just outside of Appalachian New York, in the heartland of the Haudenosaunee. I am now working as an agronomist at Cornell University, a major land grant institution where I engage in research that will enable farmers to grow field corn productively. I have strong roots in the history, culture, and science of corn in particular and agriculture in general.

My special area of interest is identifying cropping systems that have minimal negative impacts on the environment and yet allow farmers to produce corn profitably over a long period of time. Many in the agricultural community call this approach sustainable agriculture. In pursuit of sustainable cropping practices, I have examined the history of agriculture in eastern North America. I had known, of course, that Native Americans have been corn growers for a very long time, but I have only relatively recently discovered a fascinating and largely unrecognized record of indigenous agriculture along the Eastern Seaboard, extending back for centuries.

Early Farming

Many people assume that the Eastern Woodland peoples were all hunters and gatherers at the time of first contact with the Europeans in the 16th century. In fact, most Eastern Indians were farmers. Archeologists tell us that agricultural practices diffused from Mesoamerica — the area now known as Central America — into eastern North America. As early as 5000 B.C., then, Native Americans in Illinois were growing squash. The cultivation of sunflower, goosefoot, and sumpweed — all edible plants which are usually regarded as weeds today — began within the next 2,000 to 4,000 years. By 1000 A.D., an agricultural system based on corn, beans, and squash had emerged in many localities.

At the time of first contact, Europeans reported the presence of well-developed agricultural economies extending from northern Florida through New England and up into southern Canada. Vast fields of corn supplied DeSoto's armies upon their arrival in Florida in 1539, their own food stores having been exhausted during the course of their expedition. In 1616, in an account of an expedition to New England, Captain John Smith wrote that the coast of Maine "shewes you all along large cornefileds" and that there were "many iles all planted with corne."

I have only relatively recently discovered a fascinating and largely unrecognized record of indigenous agriculture along the Eastern Seaboard, extending back for centuries.

In the late 1500s, Native Americans in Virginia and North Carolina were extensively cultivating corn as well as pumpkin, beans, squash, sunflowers, chenopod (a plant in the goosefoot family, which includes spinach), and tobacco. Farther north, the

Huron and the Haudenosaunee grew extensive fields of corn. In the fertile river valleys of Pennsylvania, New York, and Ontario, Canada, they raised corn, beans, and squash. And of course, the Pilgrims encountered an established and flourishing agriculture being carried out by Native American nations such as the Pokanokets, the Narragansetts, the Nipmucs, and the Pocumtucks when they arrived in Massachusetts in the early 1600s.

The Haudenosaunee

The original homelands of the Haudenosaunee were in upstate New York between the Adirondack Mountains and Niagara Falls. By 1680, however, the Confederacy through migration and conquest gained control of much of Eastern Canada and most of the Northeastern United States, including all of what is now considered Northern Appalachia as well as portions of Virginia, West Virginia, and Kentucky.

I rarely pass a cornfield in midsummer without marveling at its growth and productivity.

In the early to mid-1400s, the Haudenosaunee Confederacy came into being with the establishment of the Great Law of Peace. The Great Law still provides the conceptual foundation for a system of participatory, consensual governance based on common rules that eventually bound together six separate Native American nations. A council of male chiefs from each of the nations, chiefs appointed by older women known as clan mothers, make decisions for the Confederacy.

The ensuing stability allowed the confederacy to become the most important political and economic entity in the Northeast for almost 500 years. Beginning in the early 1400s, it was an extensive, corn-based agriculture, one largely controlled by women, that provided the economic foundation for the Confederacy and enabled it to flourish and expand.

From the time of Jacques Cartier's exploration along the St. Lawrence River in 1535 onward, journals of European explorers and military conquerors describe a productive, dynamic agriculture in New York. The record continues with numerous and detailed entries in the diaries of Revolutionary War soldiers. These soldiers invaded Haudenosaunee lands of central New York during the Sullivan Campaign of 1779 under orders from George Washington to destroy Native American settlements and agriculture in order to prevent the Indians from providing support to the British. General John Sullivan, leader of the campaign, wrote that the Haudenosaunee town of Gennesee was "almost encircled with a clear flat, which extended for a number of miles, covered by the most extensive fields of corn and every kind of vegetables that can be conceived."

Sustainable Agriculture

As an agronomist, I find these accounts of large-scale agriculture intriguing because they describe a productive, stable cropping system that functioned without the use of plowing, inorganic fertilizers, or synthetic pesticides. Today, to be sure, such fertilizers and pesticides allow U.S. farmers to be enormously productive with very small expenditures of labor. But these same practices also concern many of us. Application of inorganic nitrogen fertilizers to hybrid corn has resulted in tremendous increases in grain yields, from a national yield of 38 bushels of corn per acre in 1930 to 140 bushels per acre in 1994. We all benefit from this intensification of agricultural productivity. It has resulted in lower food prices, greater flexibility in land use, and the freedom for most of our population to engage in non-farming activities.

But along with increased corn yields, we have also experienced increased contamination of ground and surface waters from nitrates that escape the cornfield. The loss of productive topsoil through erosion and our almost complete reliance on nonrenewable energy to support these agricultural technologies further threaten the long-term stability of our agricultural sys-

John Kahionhes Fadden, courtesy of the New York State Museum, Albany

Corn, beans, and squash make up the Haudenosaunee Three Sisters crop system.

Robert Burt

Jane Mt.Pleasant checks the early spring progress of corn planted in mounds in the Iroquois tradition.

tems. Hence, there is interest by land grant institutions such as Cornell in sustainable agriculture, not to mention my own interest and research in cropping systems.

The Three Sisters

The cropping system the Haudenosaunee used so successfully for more than 400 years is called the Three Sisters Hill System. Haudenosaunee farmers planted corn, beans, and squash together in large mounds of earth, spaced three to four feet apart. The mounds themselves performed a number of important functions. They provided an optimal physical environment for crop growth because the piled soil warmed and drained quickly in the wet, cold springs. The mounds further enhanced the condition of the soil since crop residues which add organic matter to the soil were concentrated in the hills.

Generally, when large areas of a crop are planted by hand, farmers can either "broadcast" the seed by throwing it out with a regular swing of the hand in an attempt to distribute it uniformly, or they can plant in rows or lines, a time consuming task for those such as the Haudenosaunee who obviously had no access to modern farm machinery. Planting in mounds allowed for uniform crop spacing, thus solving a crucial problem for large-scale hand agriculture: Once the mounds are established, you simply plant a certain number of seeds per hill each year. This method also afforded easy control of the corn and bean plant populations since the number of plants can be very easily increased or decreased just by varying the number of seeds planted per hill. And finally, planting in mounds greatly facilitated weed control. With the plants concentrated on the mounds, the farmer can move about the field quite easily, without worrying about stepping on young plants. Also, the farmer can focus on weeding the mounds themselves where the plants are actually growing, thus reducing the total area that must be weeded.

The selection of crops was equally important, with each "sister" providing support or benefit to the other two. Corn, the most important because of its tremendous potential to produce energy as measured by calories, supported the climbing pole beans on its sturdy stalk. For their part, the beans added nitrogen to the cropping system through their ability to take nitrogen from the air and turn it into a form available to plants. The squash, with its aggressive and low-to-the-ground growth habit, restricted the emergence of weed seedlings. Together, the three crops represent a well-balanced diet. In a word, the system was elegant.

Lessons

Although I don't expect or encourage commercial corn growers today to adopt widespread use of the Three Sisters, there is much we can learn from an agricultural system that endured and produced for more than four centuries. Embedded within the Three Sisters are several important principles that can still serve us today.

First of all, our modern cropping systems should focus on the use of multiple species — what is termed a polyculture agricultural system — rather than on the repeated growing of a single crop in the same field. This diversity of plants results in long-term stability to the agro-ecosystem. We would also do well to emulate these early Native American farmers by reducing the scope and frequency of plowing in order to minimize soil loss through erosion. After plowing, there is nothing growing on the field until the newly planted seed emerges and begins to develop a leaf canopy that protects the soil from raindrop impact which causes the soil to be dislodged and move downslope with gravity. Not only does plowing destroy the existing protective vegetation, but it also creates loose, fluffy soil that is easily moved by rain and wind. It is probably the single most important factor in determining soil erosion.

We should continually strive to create soils with high amounts of organic matter so that air and water move easily through them. We must develop our own cropping systems that efficiently use and recycle plant nutrients. And finally, we should make agricultural decisions based upon the needs of the "seventh generation," recognizing that protection and enhancement of our resource base, the earth, is our most important responsibility. Iroquois

Robert Burt

Planting corn in mounds provides several benefits: It allows for good drainage during wet springs; the mounds provide a means for uniform spacing of the crop; and weeding is simplified to cultivation of the mounds themselves.

people believe that we must act as stewards of the earth and its resources and consider the effects of our actions today in terms of their impact on the coming seven generations.

Corn

Apart from my agronomic interest in the Three Sisters, the corn plant itself draws me. I rarely pass a cornfield in midsummer without marveling at its growth and productivity. In addition to my research on corn-based cropping systems, I also grow a traditional Iroquois white corn at one of Cornell's research facilities near Cayuga Lake. Tuscarora women have been planting corn across eastern North America for centuries, from North Carolina to New York and into Canada. Today, however, there are few full-time farmers on Iroquois lands in the Northeast, and it's hard to find a sizable field of any of the traditional varieties. But I personally find immense value and a sense of connection in this indigenous crop.

Corn has also defined and shaped much of human history and development in the Appalachian region. As of 1996, more than 1.7 million acres of corn are grown here annually.

Corn has its origins in the highlands of Mexico and Guatemala. Cultivating corn for more than 7,000 years, Native American farmers there developed the corn plant from a perennial grass, teosinte, which grew and still grows wild in the region. Through intensive plant breeding and careful, persistent husbandry, the cultivation of corn has continued across thousands of years and spread over millions of acres of land. Today, corn is the third most utilized grain in the world, behind rice and wheat.

While its impact on human populations around the world has been enormous, corn has also defined and shaped much of human history and development in the Appalachian region. As of 1996, more than 1.7 million acres of corn grain are grown here annually. It is a primary feed for dairy cows, poultry, and other livestock, which together form the basis for much of the agricultural production in the region. Thus, many of our meat and dairy foods are produced from corn fed to animals. We more readily recognize the plant as sweet corn, popcorn, and in tortillas or corn bread. But it is also used as a sweetener in carbonated beverages, baby foods, soups, and cereals. It is an important oil for human consumption and is used industrially to produce inks, dyes, glues, and packaging materials.

A Gift

Corn is an enormously variable crop. There are literally hundreds of distinct varieties that differ in kernel color, maturity, stalk height and diameter, placement and number of ears, as well as productivity, drought resistance, and an array of other characteristics. The corn plant itself grows anywhere from two to 15 feet in height and can reach maturity in as little as 60 days or can require longer than six months. Kernels are white, yellow, red, blue, black, maroon, and numerous mixtures of these.

Seeing these many types and varieties of corn, people frequently ask, "But which one is Indian corn?" They all are. Every hybrid corn plant in the world today is a gift from skilled Native American farmers who have planted and saved seeds every year, deliberately manipulating genetic material that has contributed to the enormous array of types and varieties present today.

Corn cannot survive by itself. In the transformation from teosinte, with its small seedhead and easily dispersed seeds, to the contemporary plant with its large cob and tightly held kernels, corn has lost the ability to disperse its seeds naturally. If an ear falls to the ground, most of the kernels remain attached to the cob, and all will try to germinate when the temperature and moisture are adequate. More than 150 seedlings then emerge in a space the size of a footprint. Most of them will not survive. Without human beings to shell the kernels and distribute them more evenly across the field, to weed, harvest, and store the seeds, corn would cease to reproduce after a few years.

Planting corn every spring, I am reminded of this special relationship between corn and human beings. The kernels in my hand represent accumulated knowledge passed down through generations of dedicated farmers. Tending the corn plant through the growing season connects me closely to the seasons and cycles of the earth. And harvesting and saving that seed places me in a long line of Native American women who have loved corn, protected the earth, and committed to the future. N&T

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Holy Manna

sol sol-la do do re re-do mi-re-do-la, sol sol-la do do mi re do

The people who come down from D.C. and Boston
and sing the old shapes on their home ground
have notions of raised sixths and almost-Dorian scales,
and never quite get it about Dinner on the Grounds.
They never get that exquisite green bean consciousness,
have no trepidations about poke sallet,
miss the acres of cakes, the sweet potato pie,
the abounding noonday fuel for the singing square,
that none too heavenly choir, unbroken circle.
Mostly they bother the Sacred Harp people down in Alabama
about the Denson alto parts, and lead too fast,
and arrive too late for Dinner on the Grounds.

Brethren, pray, and holy manna
Will be shower'd all around.

—Robert S. Richmond

Robert S. Richmond is a samurai pathologist in private practice in Knoxville, Tenn. He makes poems of the weeds that grow on the borders of the gardens of language and is currently completing a book of such weedy poems for publication.

THE Long AND Short OF It

by Llewellyn McKernan

"Life is like muddy waters that never clear," Johnny used to say. Hope agreed, for there she was on the floor without knowing much about how it happened or why. One minute, she was rolling her pounds of flesh along in slippers and gown in the dark hall, and the next, the rug had jumped out from under her and she had fallen—on her side, too, with a jarring crash to her right hipbone, her night clothes rucked up under her and her slippers flown.

For a little while, she just lay there on the cold floor, like it was what she'd planned to do all along to break up the monotony of her nightly routine. And things did look mighty strange from this perspective. The floor spread out from the edge of her eye to the rug that had scooted some distance away and was all bunched up, like a strange animal had taken refuge under it. The bathroom was just beyond the rug, a crack of light with a pane high up on one wall through which the blue twilight shone steadily.

Hope cautiously turned on her back. (She felt a searing pain in her right thigh; then it was gone.) She raised her arms and legs feebly to see if they were broken, pathetic little sticks they were, all stuck out above her big belly, with her working them like an overturned ant burdened with a giant crumb of some dessert. "Well, you do love your sweets. That's a fact, Hope Long," she told herself. She'd spent her life making them and eating them, drowning them in sun-brewed tea or cold homemade cider.

Well, they weren't doing her any good now. It was because she was so heavy in the stomach that she couldn't raise herself to a sitting position, swing herself around, and get to her knees. But her recurring dream was that she'd died and gone to heaven—and when she got to the pearly gates, St. Peter told her he'd give her the keys if she would just tell him the recipe for her famous four-layered pineapple upside-down cake, the one that dripped with rum and beads of brown sugar and little slivers of golden fruit. That one recipe she'd kept secret all her life, the name of the spice that had given it its long shelf life (the staler it got, the sweeter it tasted) had never crossed her lips, not even for Johnny whom she'd loved more than life, who had tasted her lips and all her best recipes many a time.

Now she stared at the ceiling, her pale wrinkled face aquiver, her little black eyes snapping with anger. Well, she was an old fool—that was certain. A 75-year-old woman living alone—she might have known it'd happen sooner or later. Her older sister, Grace Short, lived less than half a block away, and her being alone too—never having married or had children—you'd think they'd both have the sense to live in one house or the other. But they'd never gotten along, and Hope reckoned that after more than seven decades, they never would.

Hope was proud and people-shy. In a group, her heart fluttered and jumped about so much, she shut her lips tight to keep it from leaping out. She crossed her arms and pressed down hard, she backed up against a wall, looked neither to the left or right, and lost all social graces. As Grace bluntly told her to her face, "You're hopeless."

She was housebound, too, by her addiction to baking and to soap operas—in both, she lost all sense of time, like in those dreams where with one balletic leap, she flew out of her own fat physique into the Olympic body of a swimmer. Dressed in a skintight bodysuit, she dived like Esther Williams into one giant dish of sweets after another, her divine flesh frosted with cinnamon and sugar, smeared with cherry-filled chocolate kisses and dripping with strawberry pie filling, with vanilla ice cream: food for her lover who comes along just when she's at the peak of her eating high and bares his muscled chest and steely thighs and dives in after her. (His legs look suspiciously like those of Pierre L'Agapé, the Frenchman who appears on *The Bad and*

She was housebound by her addiction to baking and to soap operas—in both, she lost all sense of time.

the Beautiful weekdays from three to three-thirty on WHPM. She drowns in his soulful eyes, the whites a little yellow from too much liver bile.)

If Grace Short had had such a dream in the eighty-six years she'd already lived—why, she would have died! She was a single, leather-lean woman who had made all the right decisions

Dressed in a skintight bodysuit, she dived like Esther Williams into one giant dish of sweets after another, her divine flesh frosted with cinnamon and sugar, smeared with cherry-filled chocolate kisses…

in life and knew it. Hope wondered what Grace would say when she found out about her young sister's latest escapade. She could just hear her now, talking on the phone to one of her bridge buddies, her tinny voice screeching like chalk across a blackboard. *Well, you know how Hope is, she's always sick, you are what you eat, you know, and she is the spitting image of a fat stuffed roll, if I do say so myself, and then, of course, she was by herself, as usual, only one of her girls was home that day, you know, she had so many kids I lost count, but none hardly ever come to see her any more, not even on Christmas or Thanksgiving, and though for once Lorrie May from Conroy was there, she couldn't stay, she had to get back, her son Leroy was playing in some soccer game, it goes to show how grown-up children just don't have any love and respect for their elders nowadays, soccer being the outlandish foreign game it is, I wouldn't think she'd want her son to play anyway, and Hope had been throwing up something awful for the past few days.*

Well, I thought about spending the night with her myself, but I thought, "Well, it's her own fault, eating nothing but eclairs and banana pudding and sorghum sundaes, she's made her bed, now let her lie in it." If I had that chunk of junk sloshing around inside me, I wouldn't want to do anything but lie down and pass out myself, so I says to Hope, "Now Hope, I have the key to the front door so you leave the latch off the screen, so in case you need me during the night, I can get in real quick"—well, Mabel, what do you suppose she goes and does? Why, she latches it tight and triple-bolts the locks, just to make sure, I guess, that I can't get in when she needs me most.

"Yes, you old fool," Hope gasped as she rocked onto her left side, straining to get a handhold on the floor, only to fall back, doubling the pain in her right thigh, "not only that, but the windows are sealed tight." What had she been afraid of? Breaking and entering, she guessed. There hadn't been a night since Johnny died that she hadn't walked the floor, stretching out the darkness to almost dawn, always expecting to look over her shoulder and see a gigantic black man come magically through the walls, wearing a Halloween death mask through which she could see the hate in his eyes as he wrenched her arms behind

her, twisting them tight with one monstrous hand, the other holding a knife whose sharp point was gently, teasingly testing the soft flesh between two ribs.

Hope shivered. The hall was cold, and the floor, freezing. She always turned the thermostat down at night. Her social security didn't provide enough for her to be warm all the time; her children helped when they could. They all had huge families and small jobs and couldn't afford to give her much. She had to pinch and save at every turn. For once, she was glad for all her pounds of flesh—they were some insulation from the arctic drafts roaming the house.

One hand groped, trembling, along the floor boards, trying to get a grip on something and failing. It was a short hall—really, an extended doorway between the dining room and the bath—and it had no furniture. In the bathroom window, the deep purple sky turned suddenly pitch black.

Hope gave a long sigh and composed herself as best she could. "At least I have my memories," she thought, and suddenly, one came back to her with absolute clarity, an especially hot day in July of '46 when she still had an hourglass figure—and Johnny, a longing to possess it—and he'd come home unexpectedly from the garage they'd owned ("Long Service In A Short Time" was their motto) to find her raising up from the banked heat of an oven door, wearing nothing but bra and panties, sweat trickling down her back ... She drifted off ... shivering with pleasure as she lived again in her mind the wrenching fury with which he had grabbed her by the waist and spun her around and the fiery way he had clamped his mouth on hers, wrestling off her underclothes as she grappled with his filthy mechanic's uniform, popping off the buttons as he pulled her down, down onto the linoleum, both of them wet with sweat and anticipation, her licking the salt from his rose tattoos, his hands leaving greasy black prints all over her body. Hope shuddered ... and abruptly came back to the present.

Gooselivers and grease! She was going to be here all night, in the freezing dark. Maybe she'd have a heart attack or a stroke or die of the cold. Angry tears filled her eyes. She tried to yell for help, but somehow the words got choked up in her throat. All that came out was a dreadful mewling. The only one who'd check on her was Grace—and that probably wouldn't be till morning.

She could just hear her now, telling Mabel the bad news, her shrill voice a scalding stream: *Well, if I called her once that morning, I called her a hundred times. I figured out real quick something was wrong. I figured I'd find her in the bed dead, like I found her so many times in my dreams, she's way younger than me, you know, but she won't exercise or eat right or think positive thoughts about life, why, you can't go on like that for long and not die, but believe me, I never dreamed it would happen so soon.*

The first time I called on the phone, it rang so long, I thought, "Why, she's in the bath, that's where she is, and she can't hear me," so I tried again. Mabel, I let that telephone ring off the hook until finally I just took off running in my housecoat thinking, "I bet I find her dead in the bed like in my dreams." Why, I was so upset, I even forgot to bring my key or have my breakfast or anything! And then, when I got there, I nearly tore out my fingernails trying to get in the screen, "Hope, Hope," I called, "you let me in this here minute!" But there was no response, just dead silence.

So I got this ladder from her next-door neighbor Marlin, you remember Marlin, don't you, he's that friend of Hope's, the butcher from up above Crazy Creek who came down here to live with his daughter Cherry, you know, the cripple, the one that's been wearing the artificial legs since her real ones got cut off in that automobile accident when she was so young, she never married, it's a shame, she was a real good-looking woman, too, but I guess no man wants to climb in bed with a couple of stumps, does he?

Anyway, I put this ladder against the side of the house and climbed up and looked into the bathroom window. At first, I couldn't see a thing, the glare was so bad, but I cupped my hands around my face and looked again, and what do you think I saw, Mabel, I saw Hope, yes, indeedy, she was lying in that dark hall, I could barely make her out, it was so shadowy and all, at first, it just looked like a bunch of old clothes had been dumped there for the wash, but it was her all right, after a while, I could make out something that looked like arms and a chest and that green crepe gown she's always parading around in and then those eyes of hers, staring up at the ceiling like they was hypnotized. "HOPE!" I screamed through the pane, "GET UP AND LET ME IN!" But she just kept lying there, flat on her back, like a worn-out doll padded with cotton, without one spring left to wind. "O, my god," I cried, "what if she's dead like I dreamed, only why is she on the floor and not in the bed like she's supposed to be?"

She raised her arms and legs feebly to see if they were broken, pathetic little sticks they were, all stuck out above her big belly, with her working them like an overturned ant burdened with a giant crumb of some dessert.

So I climbed down and called the fire department, and they came with all those newfangled tools they got and took the screen latch off and jiggled the locks loose and finally, I got in, and do you know, Mabel, it was awful, it was her, just like I saw in my dreams countless times, stone cold she was, and shrunk up ... Lying there like the Angel of Death had come and plucked her soul clean away, and that's what had been really fat all along.

Poor thing, I reckon it was her time to go, I'll miss her something awful, at least she doesn't have to suffer any more, not but what it was her fault, the silly woman, if only she'd lived like I do on a diet of egg yolks and garlic and blackstrap molasses, she'd still be sitting pretty in that foam-backed rocker of hers and watching those dirty soaps night and day. At least I won't be having that dream any more about finding her dead because now I've gone and actually done it. I tell you, it used to scare

me awake. I'd sit straight up in bed, the sweat pouring off me.

Hope could see Grace's face looming over her: grieved and furious and cold with condemnation, just itching for Hope to come to life again so she could scold her to death.

Hope heaved herself over onto her stomach, biting her tongue from the agony in her hip, and muttered, "I won't give Grace the satisfaction." Gathering all her strength and stretching her arms to their fullest extent, she dragged herself forward little by little with the heels of her hands until she reached the dining room, lips clamped down over the scream of pain that pressed against them. It felt like something was making its way out of her thigh with teeth that bit down harder with every inch she advanced across the rug to where the telephone sat on the dining room table.

Once she fainted from the pain but came to again, wet with perspiration, dazed, not knowing where she was or what was happening, the room full of dizzily spinning shadows, going

And here and there, roast turkeys sat like guests of honor, all trussed up with stuffing and coated with thick brown gravy.

around and around, spiraling to some final conclusion she could not grasp or comprehend ... scenes from her past tunneling into the present in bright, multicolored hues ...

John Long, her husband, back (dead for twenty years—how she missed him): Bright red in the Santa suit he wore to fool the children when they were little, he stood over her, shaking a long finger, "Get up, Hope," he said, "the Christmas goose is burning." Then little Iris ran in, dressed like an angel for the church pageant, her sequined wings sparkling with promise, her white face lovely as a flower but her little head bald and her body wasted to a string like it had been after the chemotherapy that hadn't saved her in the end from being eaten up by cancer. Now she was laughing, eating one butter cookie after the other, the sugar frosting falling in snow-white splendor until Hope was covered in the strange dear glitter, up to her eyes and then past, such sweet obliteration, "Momma, come back, come back ... " the frail child cried ... And John Jr., her son, the one the Korean War had taken from her, for one brief flashing moment, he hunkered down to lift her up in his arms and stand—she enveloped by his warm, solid flesh—and he transfixed by what he saw in front of them: a moon-colored table and on it, a spread of hot, steaming dishes. A world filled to the borders with many-splendored things: a huge forest of vinegary greens. Above it, cloud-light rolls and below it, gold fields of butter-glazed corn casseroles where pimentos posed like tiny cardinals. Plateaus of clove-scented sweet potatoes sprawled among mountains of hot pungent venison. And here and there, roast turkeys sat like guests of honor, all trussed up with stuffing and coated with thick brown gravy. All about swirled a sea of chocolate, milky and black and creamy with caramel, where pecan pies floated like islands and strawberry shortcake drifted like a boat on its own juicy red waves.

"Momma," her son said, gazing in awe at the roasted pig with an apple stuffed in its mouth, "I think I've died and gone to heaven."

That's when she came back down to earth with a thump, a thud, a hard bang on her forehead where she'd pulled the telephone down on her. But it didn't matter. Nothing mattered but that she dial with trembling fingers the right number and listen to it ring at the other end of the tunnel.

"Hello, hello," the voice said irritably. "Don't you know it's two o'clock in the morning? ... "

Hope, breathing heavily, gasped out unintelligible words.

"Is this an obscene phone call?" Marlin Depp said. "Because if it is, I'm hanging up."

Hope finally got out his name ... That was about the best she could do.

"What's that?" he yelled. "Is something wrong, Hope? Never mind ... I'll be over there soon's I can find those keys you gave me. Yes, yes, I know how to jiggle a latch off with a fingernail file. I've done it many a time. Everything's going to be all right. Just stay where you are."

"As if I was going anywhere in my state," Hope thought, as she settled down to wait, adjusting her hip to the rhythm of a steady ache. N&T

Llewellyn McKernan is a poet and children's book writer. Her essay on place is included in Bloodroot: Reflections on Place by Appalachian Women Writers, *to be published by the University Press of Kentucky.*

Wild Strawberries

Wild strawberries hide in May
in fallow corners of fields
where rocks and rotting limbs lay.
By berry and green leaf, they seal

A covenant that man first made
in working hard the land to grow
corn and beans in neat rows laid.
Without the hand of man to sow

And keep clear bottom land,
fewer strawberries there'd be;
only brush and saplings we'd find.
A strawberry would become a ruby

To hold in sunlight and admire,
or treasure more sweet and sour
than the woman's heart we desire.
Better, friend, berries to devour.

—John Cantey Knight

John Cantey Knight met his wife, Betty Sue Brackett of Choestoe settlement, while attending Young Harris College in North Georgia. Over the past 30 years of matrimony, he has eaten gallons of wild strawberries.

Reviews

The Bluegrass Music Cookbook

by Penny Parsons, Ken Beck, and Jim Clark

John F. Blair
Winston-Salem, N.C. - 1997
$16.95 (paper)

I've been collecting cookbooks for about 30 years now. At this point, a book has to cover some exotic subject or be especially intriguing to elicit that "I-must-have-it" response from me. So when *Now & Then's* reviews editor Sandra Ballard asked me to write about a cookbook for the Appalachian food issue, I thought, "Great. I'll get a cookbook for nothing (the best bargain), and I'll be able to take a look at something I may have passed over in my search for the few remaining must-haves lurking out there in bookland."

Then *The Bluegrass Music Cookbook* arrived. I hadn't known what to expect—but this was not quite it.

Once I began looking through the cookbook, however, I became intrigued. Included are 375 recipes submitted by 180 bluegrass performers, from the late Bill Monroe to Ricky Skaggs and Alison Krauss.

Ranging from the simple to the complex, the recipes cover a broad gamut. There are, of course, lots of good country dishes between its covers, the requisite number of possum and groundhog recipes, and a full quota of corn bread and bean dishes. But the book also contains a variety of game recipes, Tex-Mex, Chinese, and dishes from other ethnic groups as well as a goodly number of vegetarian offerings and gourmet treats.

The authors have interspersed tongue-in-cheek concoctions among more straightforward recipes for everything from appetizers, beverages, and soups to jams, jellies, and desserts. For example, Blue Highway's Wayne Taylor contributes his idea of the "perfect bluegrass lunch": First, he instructs, "drive 1/2 mile to the Burger King. Order 2 regular burgers and 1 medium Diet Coke. Then drive 5 miles to my favorite spot and tune in to 1 hour of bluegrass for lunch with Tim White on WGOC radio in Blountville, Tennessee. Makes 1 happy meal," he concludes.

If you are serious about tackling something truly basic to bluegrass, you can try mandolin and fiddle-player Jonathan Yudkin and singer Kathy Mattea's "Poached Plectrum Platter." Generating awe—and giggles—from the reviewer, the ingredient list begins with "1 banjo, pre-war Gibson Mastertone preferred (strap optional)" and ends with "1 cake rosin, diced."

Then there is the recipe itself: "Remove the resonator from the banjo, carefully destring, and discard all nubs. Place the liquid in a stock pot and bring to a full rolling boil. Add the plectrum and reduce heat to simmer, covering tightly with the resonator." When the dish is done, you're to "pour the sauce over the banjo and garnish with a sprinkle of Dill Monroe. Served with Fiddlehead Fricassee and Salty Dog biscuit. Bone aperteet!"

With so many mouthwatering possibilities staring me in the face, I decided it would be only proper to try some of the dishes out. I also realized that it was too big a job for me to tackle alone, so I talked a group of friends into preparing a feast in honor of the book. I gave them a choice of recipes, from appetizers to dessert. We gathered at my house on a Saturday evening and pigged out. The food was wonderful. Almost everything disappeared completely.

We found that most, but not all, of the recipes were well-documented. There were problems, though, with gathering a few of the ingredients. For instance, just what are those rattlesnake buttons suggested as garnish in the recipe for "Jack Slade's 1862 Green Rattlesnake Chili"? Danny Rogers of The Bluegrass Patriots who contributed the recipe might know; I haven't got a clue. These problems were compounded by the fact that it is difficult at times to figure out when your leg is being pulled.

Recipes also came with varying degrees of detail when it came to quantities of ingredients, cooking times, and actual preparation techniques, such as the specific number and thickness of layers of dough for a delicious sounding dried apple stack cake. But most everyone involved in the taste-testing festivities was an experienced cook and able to compensate for the occasionally vague directions. A novice cook, however, would very likely have to pick and choose carefully the first few times around to avoid confused frustration.

The volume itself is attractively presented and contains a great deal more than just recipes. The photographs show both individual artists and the groups to which they belong. Most of these are promotional shots, but some are rare, and there are informal family photos, portraits, and performance pictures. Also interspersed throughout the book are profiles about such bluegrass greats as the Stanley Brothers, Mac Wiseman, Doc Watson, and Jim and Jesse McReynolds, among others. There are descriptions of bluegrass institutions and organizations, such as East Tennessee State University's Bluegrass and Country music program and a two-page spread on bluegrass festivals. Some recipes are accompanied by commentary from their contributors, giving the

Charles Moore

The remnants of the feast litter the table after the guests helped themselves to dinner from *The Bluegrass Music Cookbook.*

recipe's history, helpful hints, or advice. And for bluegrass trivia buffs, there are several quizzes to test your knowledge.

There are two indexes: a recipe index and a general index listing people, institutions, and organizations. The listing of people is quite comprehensive; the coverage of institutions is less so. The recipe index, however, is easy-to-use, listing individual recipes by name and by main ingredients.

All in all, the book is well done. An added incentive to buy the volume is the fact that part of the proceeds from sales goes to the Owensboro, Ky.-based International Bluegrass Music Association's Bluegrass Trust Fund, which helps support bluegrass musicians and their families when financial crises strike.

I might well have bypassed *The Bluegrass Music Cookbook,* not recognizing it for the "must-have" it is. I will be returning to this cookbook many times. It is fun to look at the pictures, informative to read, the recipes are tasty — and I am determined to find out one of these days just what those "rattlesnake buttons" are.

—Nancy Fischman

An accomplished cook of some renown, Nancy Fischman is the self-confessed "compulsive layout person" who serves as Now & Then's *managing editor.*

Whop Biscuits & Fried Apple Pie: Cooking with Gatlinburg's Great Smoky Arts & Crafts Community

by Kathy Shields Guttman

Wordsmith Ventures
Toronto - 1997
$15.95 (paper)

"I fell in love with the Smoky Mountains, its regional food, and its arts and crafts community," writes Kathy Shields Guttman. During her frequent visits to the Gatlinburg, Tenn., area, Guttman would ask artisans to tell her the best places in town to eat. The artisans responded with glowing descriptions of delicious trout, the tastiest hushpuppies, the largest buffets, and the best homemade pies.

"I felt the seeds of a cookbook idea beginning to sprout," she reports. "After all, cooking is a form of art. And it stands to reason that if cooking and creativity go hand-in-hand and artists are naturally creative, then the perfect ingredients for a good cookbook would be artists sharing their favorite recipes. It all added up: cooking, creativity, artists." *Whop Biscuits & Fried Apple Pie* is the cookbook that grew out of that germ of an idea. It is Guttman's way of sharing her discoveries with others.

The community the author got to know is made up of artisans from Gatlinburg, the gateway community to the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Some of the artists are Gatlinburg natives, their families having been in the area for generations. Others have various Southern roots and accents, while still others are Northerners or hail from America's heartland. There is even a New Englander and a former Canadian.

This cookbook—containing both simple and sophisticated recipes—is a celebration of native recipes mixed in with those collected by artists, craftspeople, and their friends. The artisans shared recipes for good food that could be cooked creatively but without fuss. There is a good variety in this collection, from pinto beans and dumplings, whop biscuits (as in "I just buy a can of those refrigerated biscuits, whop the can on the counter, and place them in a pan") and hillbilly fried rice to bourboned pork roast, fiesta chicken, and quilted rose seafood casserole.

Reading the cookbook is a delightful experience. What I found especially interesting were the brief descriptions of the cooks and of their particular craft and its history. They shared their philosophy of life and talked about the way they lived. Guttman has edited the artists' remarks and worked the recipes into a pleasing whole.

I particularly liked some of the memorable quotes Guttman interspersed among the recipes. For example, one contributor confided that "rumor has it that the real reason the Civil War started is because some Yankee put sugar in the cornbread." Another related the fine points of inherited culinary etiquette: "I learned from my grandmother it is not polite to ask someone for their recipe. God forbid if you do that! You tell them how good it is, and that you would like to make it. If they give it to you, fine, but you don't ask."

The cookbook's title implies that it is charming, funny, and "down-home" in origin. The warm, rich colors of the cover photograph—showing a wood-burning cook stove, a straight-back hickory chair, a bucket of water with a dipper, and old-fashioned pots and pans—all reminded me of Appalachia and my childhood at Stoney Fork, Ky. I anticipated delving into the book.

When I did, however, I felt a bit deceived both by the catchy, cute title and by the photograph on the cover. Instead of country fare on the first few pages, I found recipes for artichoke dip and avocado salad, for "refried bootlegger beans," and Orange Julius. But my feelings of betrayal were assuaged when I realized that recipes with stereotypical or cutesy names are very few, compared to those with classic, common names.

All in all, I thoroughly enjoyed this book and plan to try several of the recipes as soon as possible. I encourage you to sample some of the more than 200 recipes bound in these pages. You will find new recipes, read about special places in the Great Smoky Mountains, and perhaps reflect with the artisans as they share their memories and anecdotes.

—Sidney Saylor Farr

Sidney Saylor Farr, editor of Appalachian Heritage, *is the author of five books, the most recent of which are* Table Talk: Appalachian Meals and Memories *from the University of Pittsburgh Press and* Headwaters, *a poetry collection from Pocohontas Press.*

Bootstraps and Biscuits: 300 Wonderful, Wild Food Recipes from the Hills of West Virginia

by Anna Lee Terry

ALT Press
Fairmont, W.Va. - 1997
$17.98 (paper)

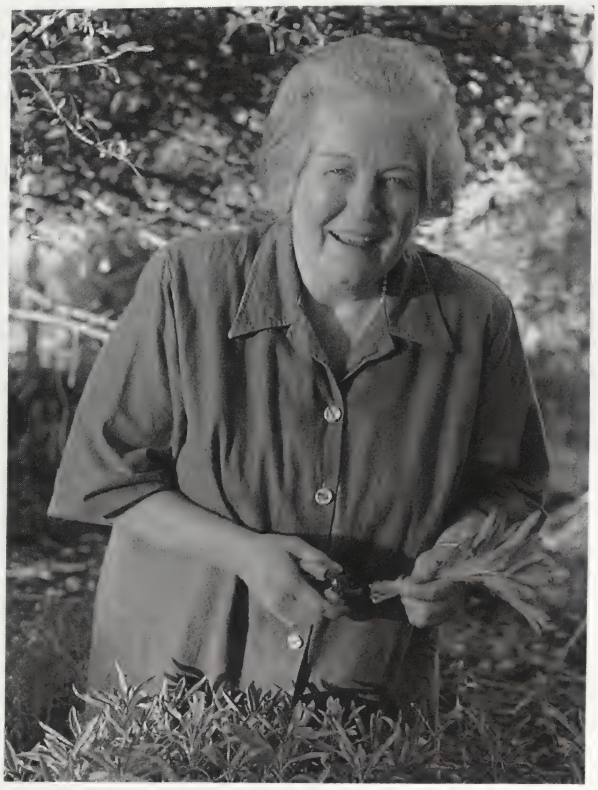
"If the world gives you sour grapes," advises Anna Lee Terry, "you make jam."

Reviews

It's clear from Terry's exhaustive wild foods cookbook, *Bootstraps and Biscuits,* that Terry has been making jam—and a vast array of other dishes—for a long time. The 178-page, fully indexed paperback sprinkles homespun autobiographical tidbits from life on a mountain farm amid her instructions on preparing a diverse array of dishes.

Consequently, along with being a valuable resource for cooking, the book is a testament to the bounty of nature and a story about a rapidly disappearing way of life. It is also a gift to a beloved great-grandmother—and a memorial to a missing son.

Born in 1932, Terry writes about being raised on an isolated family farm in northern West Virginia. With her blind great-grandmother by her side, Terry kept house for a multigenerational extended family. This included preparing huge midday meals made from wild foods and game.



Mike Furbee

Anna Lee Terry

Later, as a 40-year-old woman, Terry returned to her memories of that childhood. The process of research and experimentation that resulted in this book began 20 years ago when the widowed Terry developed a disabling back problem that forced her to leave her job as a nurse. Not long afterwards, her college-aged only son died suddenly.

Grief-stricken, in chronic pain, and trying to exist on a dramatically reduced income, Terry took drastic action. She sold her house, packed up some clothes and dishes, and left for a cramped old milk house on the family farm. There, in the shed where she had made cream, butter, and cottage cheese as a young girl, Terry's memories of a farm childhood were rekindled. And those memories helped her cope.

During the daily walks ordered by her doctor, Terry began collecting the things her grandma had collected. She started to experiment with recipes, to read old cookbooks—and to write. As her grandma had before her, Terry cut poke greens; gathered immature black walnuts for pickling; and picked violet leaves for pot herbs.

Stories—of struggle, family life, and country life—introduce the chapters and recipes in *Bootstraps and Biscuits.* For example, when Terry explains how to gather and prepare pickled garlic and onions, she also reminisces about her "poor Grandpa George" grubbing for those wild garlic and onions, what he called "the Devil's weeds," by the light of a lantern and burning them on a brush pile. And recipes for wild berry (grape, raspberry, blackberry, huckleberry, strawberry, and elderberry) jams, chutneys, pies, cakes, frosting, fillings, vinegars, and more are introduced with narratives harkening back to sunlit days of berry picking.

The 300 recipes, both common and offbeat, are illustrated with line drawings of wild plants and laced with homespun wisdom. Readers learn: Violets are chock-full of vitamins; day lily shoots taste like tender green beans; and coffee-like brews can be made from dandelion root, acorns, nut grass, goose grass, yellow goatsbeard, and common sunflowers. They learn, too, that milkweed makes a delicious summer soup; that white sweet clover is a good substitute for vanilla; and that wild persimmons—ripe when wrinkled, brownish, and gooey—are perfect for chiffon pies and steamed puddings, for drop cookies and ice cream.

Terry also gives detailed directions for butchering, smoking, brining, baking, barbecuing, pickling, and fixing all sorts of wild game—from bear, deer, and rabbit to beaver, turtle, and frog. Along with instructions on making jerky, sausage, scrapple, hot dog sauce and (real) mincemeat (as opposed to "mock" mincemeat which includes lard and minced raisins, apples, and nuts but leaves out the beef heart), readers will gain such useful information as the fact that deer "chased by dogs or shot to pieces, hauled around or left until later to dress, will not taste like one done properly." There's even a section called "You can too eat skunk!"

"My son and his friends were always tasting and asking questions about all these wild foods," Terry writes. "He told me to write it all down, but I never got around to it until after he was gone." His death made her realize that "so much is lost to each generation, and it just doesn't seem right."

—Mary Rodd Furbee

Mary Rodd Furbee's work has appeared in The Washington Post, Gannett News Service, Goldenseal, *and other publications. The author of* The Complete Guide to West Virginia Inns, *she is currently free-lancing, teaching as an adjunct in West Virginia University's school of journalism, and working on a series of children's books about women during the American Revolution.*

Mountain Country Cooking: A Gathering of the Best Recipes from the Smokies to the Blue Ridge

by Mark F. Sohn

St. Martin's Press
New York - 1996
$26.95 (hardcover)

My mother is an excellent country cook. As someone once said about her, "She knows how to put a good taste on things." Trouble is, other than the two volumes she calls on when baking—a Spry (of shortening fame) cookbook and

one from Watkins Products—she doesn't use published recipes. So I was glad to see that Mark Sohn included many of her (and my) favorites in *Mountain Country Cooking*. To write this cookbook, Sohn gathered the recipes and insights into mountain cooking gleaned from his discussions with Appalachian cooks; he also researched and referenced many regional and classic cookbooks.

Sohn recognizes a time-honored Appalachian practice of meal planning in the cookbook's organization: He includes "starches" (sweet and white potatoes, corn, and pinto beans) as a distinct category to include in the meal. Other categories include mountain country breakfasts (don't miss the chocolate gravy), breads (including corn bread and dumplings), salads and vegetables, soups and casseroles, country meats, and seafood and wild game.

There are two sections on desserts; not many cookbooks can boast an entire dessert section dedicated to "delights, cobblers, apples, pawpaws, sassafras, and pecans." In "Beverages and Hospitality Extras," Sohn includes mountain favorites such as boiled custard, Tennessee eggnog, hot cocoa, apple butter, pickled beets, and chow chow. Altogether, there are almost 300 Southern and mountain favorites, including buttermilk biscuits, soup beans, jam and stack cake, corn bread dressing, macaroni and cheese, and fried apples.

Readers will like the easy-to-follow format, which presents the ingredient list as a sidebar on the page. Also helpful is a "difficulty" rating for each recipe that is based on the number of ingredients and steps involved in preparation. Besides the original recipes, Sohn includes "healthy choice alternatives": instructions on how to reduce the number of calories or fat grams to suit today's emphasis on a leaner lifestyle.

As with any regional cookbook, some of the ingredients for recipes are not commonly available. In certain cases, substitutes are suggested—for example, bananas for pawpaws—and Sohn has included a list of mail order sources for a number of hard-to-find ingredients. A glossary of food terms and expressions provides insight into both the Appalachian diet and dialect.

This cookbook is much more than a collection of regional recipes, however. It is an entertaining story about Appalachian cooking. At times, it reads like a memoir as Sohn, who grew up in Oregon, tells of his first taste of corn bread as a teenager while having breakfast with his father at the Hotel Soaper in Henderson, Ky., or recounts interactions with friends and neighbors in Eastern Kentucky, where he is now a psychology professor at Pikeville College.

His descriptions of the characteristics of corn bread are so evocative, you can see and taste the crunchy texture and brown color of the crust. For some dishes, the author includes interesting information about origins or names, naturally tracing many Appalachian recipes to England and Scotland. In addition, Sohn, who has studied cooking in France, provides basic cooking instruction and offers insights into those confounding "science-of-cooking" questions, such as why it is that dumplings fall apart.

While you won't find recipes for the entrées from restaurants such as Ruby Tuesday or Grady's (also Southern traditions), you will find honest-to-goodness Appalachian recipes. I've even tried some of them out on Mama—and she approves.

—Peggy Lewis Smith

A graduate of the University of Alabama, Birmingham, and the University of Tennessee, Peggy Lewis Smith designs, develops, and manages environmental, safety, and health training at Oak Ridge Associated Universities in Oak Ridge, Tenn.

Books & Music Worth Mentioning

All-Day Singing & Dinner on the Ground: Recipes from the Parton Family Kitchen by Willadeene Parton (With a forward by Dolly Parton; Nashville: Rutledge Hill Press, 1997; $14.95 paper). This book includes Parton favorite foods and family photographs. There are recipes for everyday meals and for special occasions: Easter, Decoration Day picnics, canning and hunting seasons, Thanksgiving and Christmas dinners.

Dori Sanders' Country Cooking: Recipes and Stories from the Family Farm Stand by Dori Sanders (Chapel Hill, N.C.: Algonquin Books, 1995; $18.95 hardcover). The author of the novels *Clover* and *Her Own Place* grew up in upstate South Carolina, near York, where peaches provide the inspiration for all manner of desserts. Organized mostly by season, the book has Sanders' favorite recipes for corn-shucking suppers, hog killings, molasses-making time, and family reunions. There's even a chapter on "cooking for Northerners," which includes "Yankee okra," making this delicacy palatable for almost everyone. She also provides stories about the invention of the recipes.

Food & Recipes of the Smokies by Rose Houk (Gatlinburg, Tenn.: Great Smoky Mountains Natural History Association, 1996; $11.95 spiral-bound paper). *Food & Recipes of the Smokies* focuses on popular foods—from the 18th century up to 1934, when the national park was created. Featured are traditional meats, sweets, breads, relishes, herb teas—and even moonshine.

Illustrated with black-and-white archival photographs and attractive block print designs, it's a book for people who already know how to cook on woodstoves and for those who are curious about those times. This collection will inspire readers to want to recreate the dishes their great-grandmamas made, though the emphasis is on a description of the food and the culture, rather than on elaborate "how-to" instructions. Novices probably shouldn't try these at home, but the book is nevertheless impressive in how it interprets history through food—and reminds us that we are what we eat.

Jack's Skillet: Plain Talk and Some Recipes from a Guy in the Kitchen by Jack Butler (Chapel Hill, N.C.: Algonquin Books,

1997; $19.95 hardcover). Using his Arkansas/Mississippi roots, this novelist and poet combines his "improvisational" (i.e., work with what you have) approach to cooking with his personal observations about making meals meaningful. The 60 recipes he includes celebrate a range of favorites, from biscuits and chicken pot pie to strawberry shortcake.

Kinfolks and Custard Pie: Recollections & Recipes from an East Tennessean by Walter N. Lambert (Knoxville, Tenn.: University of Tennessee Press, 1988; $15.95 hardcover). Combining reminiscences with recipes to suit each season, Lambert offers recipes that date back to 1935 (the year of his birth). He includes chapters on "The Place and People," as well as a section entitled "Good Stuff When You Can Get It" on biscuits, corn breads, and cobblers. This is an accessible, tantalizing collection.

Pie Every Day: Recipes and Slices of Life by Pat Willard (Chapel Hill, N.C.: Algonquin Books, 1997; $19.95 hardcover). *Pie Every Day* contains an exhaustive range of recipes for pie crusts and ways to fill them. Willard's chapter on "The Scary Crust" does as well as words can to guide a prospective pie baker through the process. The book will inspire you to drag out the flour sack and brew some coffee.

Sycamore by Glen Simpson, produced by Eric Garrison (Hardy, Ky.: Tomato Gravy Label, 1996; $15 CD, $10 cassette). If Neil Young had a balladeer brother from the Tug River Valley in Mingo County, W.Va., here's how he'd sound. The homage to "Tomato Gravy" that appears on this CD celebrates country breakfasts that stick to your ribs. An added bonus: The liner notes include the recipe.

Table Talk: Appalachian Meals and Memories edited by Sidney Saylor Farr (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1995; $29.95 hardcover, $15.95 paper). How often do you find highly readable history that includes delightful recipes for entertaining and everyday eating? Don't expect to own it without finding yourself reading it at the kitchen table. This is a landmark cookbook.

The New South Carolina Cookbook by the South Carolina Family and Community Leaders (Columbia, S.C.: University of South Carolina Press, 1997; $16.95 paper). Accomplished South Carolina cooks—from the Blue Ridge to the beaches—have taste tested the 580 recipes, which include plenty of ways to use peaches, sweet potatoes, cornmeal, collards, melons, fish, and seafood. More health conscious than some cookbook writers, these authors provide entire chapters on planning well-balanced meals and reducing sugars and fats. Helpful symbols identify South Carolina specialties, good recipes for crowds, and low-fat choices.

The Tomato in America: Early History, Culture and Cookery by Andrew F. Smith (Columbia, S.C.: University of South Carolina Press, 1994; $24.95 hardcover). The definitive scholarly book on the tomato, it's mostly a history documenting the introduction of the fruit to America. Thomas Jefferson gets credit for helping to popularize tomatoes for eating. Chapters focus on cooking and using tomatoes for medicinal purposes. Vintage recipes date back to the early 1800s. A good book for serious tomato growers and for tomato lovers who take tomatoes very seriously.

W-Hollow Cookbook compiled by Glennis Stuart Liles and Betty Stuart Baird; edited by C.D. Charles (Third edition; Ashland, Ky.: Jesse Stuart Foundation, 1996; $24 hardcover). The *W-Hollow Cookbook* combines hundreds of recipes from six generations of Jesse Stuart's family with family photographs and notable quotes. Family members share memories and "good plain cooking." This new edition includes a recipe index. Just the thing for Jesse Stuart fans and for anybody else who wants a taste of Kentucky.

—Sandra L. Ballard

Now & Then *Reviews Editor Sandy Ballard is associate professor of English at Carson-Newman College, Jefferson City, Tenn.*

Ulster and North America: Transatlantic Perspectives on the Scotch-Irish

Edited by H. Tyler Blethen and Curtis W. Wood Jr.

The University of Alabama Press
Tuscaloosa, Ala., and London - 1997
$39.95 (hardcover)

This collection of 11 essays was culled from 18 years' worth of papers given at the biennial meetings of the Ulster-American Heritage Symposium. These meetings have alternated between Northern Ireland and Appalachia since the Symposium's founding in 1976. By coming out of the first ongoing symposium series to span the Atlantic, *Ulster and North America* inaugurates a new phase of Scotch-Irish studies. Historians Tyler Blethen, Curtis Wood, and their contributors—scholars from the U.S., Scotland, Ireland, and Canada—confirm and strengthen the growing realization of the importance of the North British in North American history, while at the same time, they overturn many hoary assumptions about the exact nature of that contribution.

First of all, these essays should lay to rest any lingering doubts that the Scotch-Irish have made a major contribution to North American civilization in general and to that of the U.S. Upper South in particular. Despite the geniuses at the U.S. Census Bureau who disallow *Scotch-Irish* as a self-designation because they insist it denotes mixed ancestry, this book shows that those who have always recognized that the term *Scotch-Irish* describes a distinct ethnic group have been right all along.

Both in their introduction and in their

essay, "Scotch-Irish Frontier Society in Southwestern North Carolina," U.S. historians Blethen and Wood document the Scotch-Irish connection with the Upper South in general and with Western North Carolina in particular. In his essay, "Ulster Emigration to North America, 1680-1720," British economic historian Graeme Kirkham shows that substantial Ulster emigration to North America started in the late 1600s, even earlier than previously thought. American historical geographer Russel L. Gerlach makes the important point in "Scotch-Irish Landscapes in the Ozarks" that even the frontier migrants who pushed on beyond the Mississippi, groups with no surviving ethnic *self-identity,* still carried with them a distinct ethnic *culture.* Gerlach, along with Blethen and Wood, shows how this ethnic culture has survived in land use patterns.

Scottish historian Edward J. Cowan attends to the less material aspects of culture in "Prophecy and Prophylaxis: A Paradigm for the Scotch-Irish?" This is an essay which enriches the book's approach by discussing the continuity between Scottish prophetic writings and later American religious attitudes. I personally found "The Scotch-Irish Element in Appalachian English: How Broad? How Deep?" by U.S. linguistics scholar Michael Montgomery very interesting. In this essay, Montgomery examines both Ulster and Appalachian English with a much more sophisticated methodology than that applied by previous investigators, and thus he confirms a strong Scotch-Irish element in the deeper structures of mountain speech.

However, this volume does not simply confirm received wisdom about the Scotch-Irish. Its historical studies strongly support the past decade's revisionist approaches to the study of Appalachia and give this revisionism a transatlantic dimension. Blethen and Wood examine exaggerations—found in a multitude of accounts from various sources—of "Celtic" influence throughout the whole South; they also attack many of the specific features of the "Celtic" stereotype. Irish historian Vivienne Pollock's "The Household Economy in Early Rural America and Ulster: The Question of Self-Sufficiency," American historian Warren Hofstra's "Land, Ethnicity, and Community at the Opequon Settlement, Virginia, 1730-1800," and Canadian historian Catherine Anne Wilson's "The Scotch Irish and Immigrant Culture on Amherst Island, Ontario" all expose the myth of Scotch-Irish "independence." They especially take aim at the notion that the Scotch-Irish valued individual independence at the expense of social cohesion—a stereotype which has been both positively and negatively applied.

Despite their somewhat different emphases and conclusions, these authors draw a picture of a society both familial and communal—and also thoroughly commercialized. This picture links with recent work such as that of sociologist Wilma Dunaway and historians Paul Salstrom and David Hsiung on antebellum Appalachia and its connections to world capitalism. Furthermore, it invites, I think, new questions involving distinctions between market-*dominated* societies, where local markets are controlled by external market economies, and truly market-*oriented* societies where market thinking permeates the society itself. Gerlach, again, makes important distinctions between different social levels of Scotch-Irish immigrants in the Ozarks, a phenomenon which I have informally observed in the Ohio Valley.

All of these contributions, along with others by Irish historians S. J. Connolly, William Macafee, and Trevor Parkhill, make it plain that North British society—whether in Scotland, Ulster, or North America—was never uniform, never fixed in either a state of static utopia or a stagnant squalor. Rather it was—and is—a constantly changing and adapting part of Western civilization as a whole, always distinct but never separate.

Those interested in the Ulster/North British contribution to America, especially those of us who have depended on others' legwork to support our own attempts at synthesis, will find this volume a must-read.

—Rodger Cunningham

Rodger Cunningham is author of Apples on the Flood: Minority Discourse and Appalachia *and of many articles and reviews.*

Ditch Tea

Storms pour water
over leftover leaves
in the roadside ditch,
steeping for days
as sediment settles
and the sky sweetens
everything with light
and the restless sun
adds a lemony twist
until the tea's perfect.
The wind's very thirsty,
and the cloudy trees
admiring themselves
in watery mirrors,
and all the local dogs
and tantalized dead,
but they must wait:
the first drink always
goes to the patient earth,
who sips slowly, being full.

—Michael McFee

Michael McFee has published five books of poems, most recently Colander *from Carnegie Mellon University Press and the anthology* The Language They Speak Is Things To Eat: Poems by Fifteen Contemporary North Carolina Poets *from the University of North Carolina Press. He was born in Asheville, N.C., and now teaches poetry-writing and literature at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill.*

Homesick

What is the thing inside
that follows the earthy smell of morning
out into the day, carries me down the road
in my car to the fabric store, to hover
over remnant tables, finger folds
of blue and green calico — little Dutch
girls and shamrocks, linger over cards
of brightly colored bias tape and silvery
snaps? The thing inside that pulls
me further down the road to wander
through nurseries, yearning
for yardfuls of lilac and peony bushes,
tugs me toward antique stores,
something about a pitcher, clear
glass, and milk so cold it hurts?
The thing inside brings me home,
knows what it is
I am trying to remember.

At home, my girls are needful, weary,
too much wear and tear
in their days. I spoon mellow,
peppery chicken pie into creamy dishes set
on October-blue mats, watch them lift the crust
with their forks to see what's inside, suspecting
vegetables in there with the chicken. "You know
what my mamaw used to say
to me?" I tell them, "Eat every carrot
and pea on your plate."
I tell them about a salt-and-pepper
woman, round-faced like me,
in a hairnet and blue cotton duster,
her yard full of cousins, hiding
in flowering bushes
and twilight from parents
already in their cars.

Oh I yearn to live
for the things I love, for the thing I put
inside the food and the girls
who eat, for the road
and the thing inside the road that follows
after me and calls me back, to the pitcher
Mamaw trusted me to lift from the refrigerator
and pour, not because I was big enough,
but because I was
so in love with the pitcher
and with her.

—Diane Gilliam Fisher

Diane Gilliam Fisher lives in Kent, Ohio, with her husband and two daughters. Her people are from the Tug River Valley region of Kentucky and West Virginia. Her work has also appeared in Appalachian Heritage.

Chores

Where will they go
these men and women of earth?
This man whose sweat
waters grain.
This woman
whose milk is the strength in human bone.
As the seeds they have saved
from great-grandparents to be given
to children not yet born
are eaten by the fiery incinerators of banks.

How can they replace the pain
of what their bodies have become:
(like cells in the tradition of blood
that feed the body is)
this farm
that feeds those that rule to crush this Land.
A million years of digging in dirt,
now passed on as the nightmare
of empty hands.

Who will separate
the wheat from the chaff?

Now there will be nothing
but tears that go into the rows
that once furrowed their dreams.
What kind of food can be grown from
the water in salt?
From the lonely song of a dry desert air.

Friends, think of the music gone from
the symphony of those fields.
The dance of breakfast
being born there for the human race.

Life out of balance
lost like the homeless in city streets,
like walking suicide.
Deprived of their choices.

—Thomas Rain Crowe

Thomas Rain Crowe is a poet, essayist, translator, and editor-at-large for the Asheville Poetry Review. *He lives in Cullowhee, N.C.*

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Aunt Mary's Birthday Party

At some point in the 1930s, relatives and friends gathered to celebrate Mary Cockram's 100th birthday with dinner-on-the-ground in Patrick County, Va. Her great-great-niece Anita Cox of Stuart, Va., remembers that there was invariably a "bountiful table" at such occasions. "Everybody brought something, and there was always a wash tub full of lemonade for the children."

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